



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS	<b>3</b>
2021 IN NUMBERS	<b>4</b>
TRAINING LEADERS - MEA REGION	<b>5</b>
- SUDAN	<b>10</b>
CONNECTING LEADERS	<b>12</b>
BUILDING ALLYSHIP	<b>13</b>
ADVOCATING FOR RIGHTS	<b>14</b>
AMEL IN 2022	<b>15</b>
TEAM	<b>16</b>
SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS	<b>17</b>



## REFLECTING ON 2021

While 2021 was an enormously challenging year, it was also a year filled with enormous good, thanks to the AMEL community!

Our community came together in incredible ways to support young civil society activists across the Middle East & Africa (MEA) and surrounding areas. To name just one example, our community made it possible to build the civic knowledge of thousands of young activists across the MEA region, particularly in Sudan where a historic transition to democracy hangs in the balance. After participating in AMEL training,

young activists are now better equipped to play constructive and pivotal roles as civic leaders in Sudan and all across Africa and the Middle East. There is much more to be done in order to achieve a world of dignity and rights for all, but with the burgeoning and committed young generations leading the way, there has never been a better window of opportunity!

**MOHAMED ABUBAKR**

President

**MEGAN HALLAHAN**

Executive Director

# 2021 IN NUMBERS

A glimpse at some of AMEL's 2021 numerical milestones, including:

18K

Sudanese gained  
democracy  
knowledge

350

AMEL Institute  
Alumni empowered  
& connected

200

MEA civic activists  
enrolled in AMEL  
Institute

12K

reached by MENA  
Advocates for  
Gender Equality

215

Jewish & Muslim  
professionals built  
mutual understanding

1M

reached by  
awareness  
campaigns

450

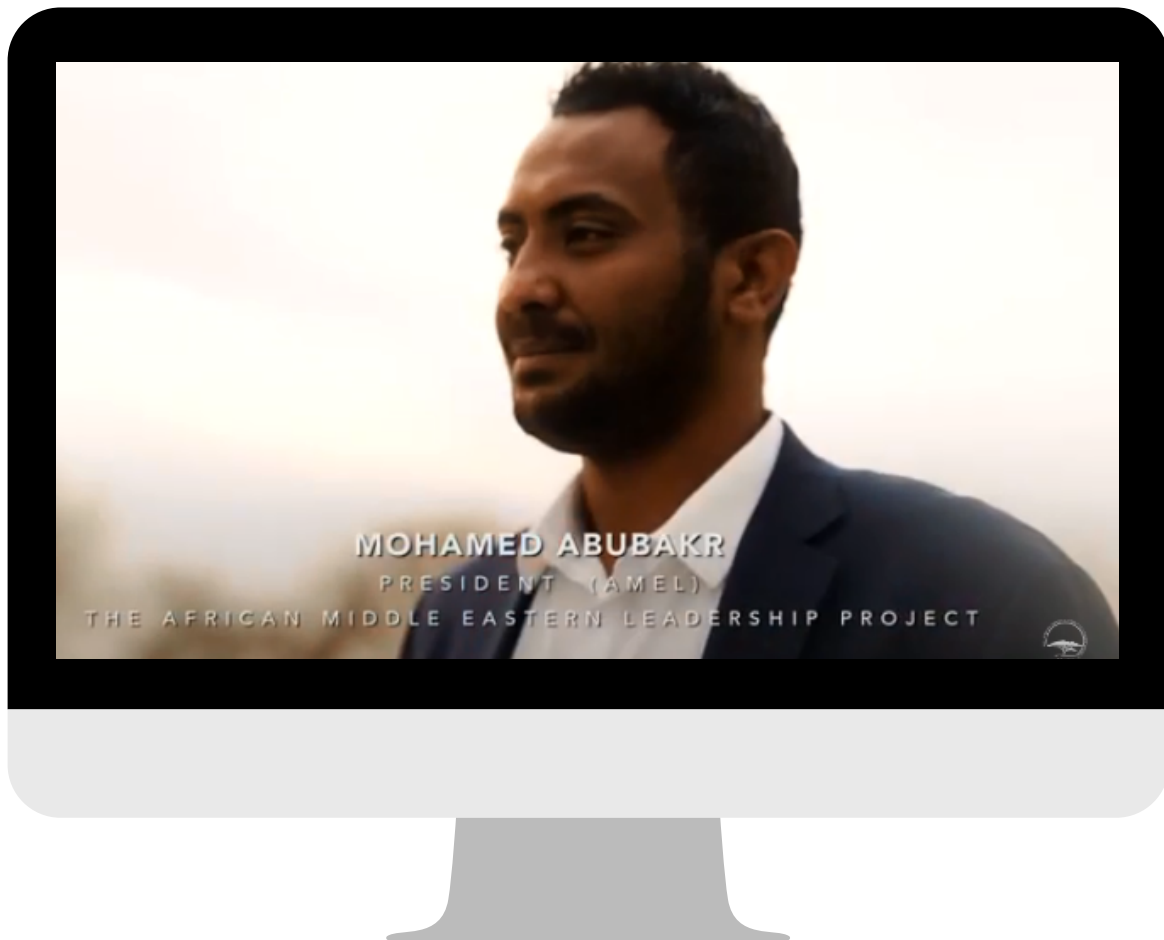
individuals facing  
rights violations  
assisted

400

advocacy actions  
engaging the inter-  
national community

# TRAINING LEADERS: AMEL INSTITUTE

In 2021, 200 young civil society activists from 32 countries all across the Middle East and Africa enrolled in the AMEL Institute regional online training program. The intensive 6-week training included video lectures, quizzes, live Q&As and ongoing webforum discussions to help trainees (aged 18-35) become more safe and effective in their civic activism.



Through a combination of expert and practitioner instruction, trainees gained knowledge and skills in the areas of:

- human rights;
- activist safety and self-care;
- Holocaust and genocide history and prevention;
- conflict transformation, peace and nonviolent movement-building;
- democratic development and gender mainstreaming;
- leveraging new media to communicate activism causes.

## AMEL INSTITUTE TRAINEES

Trainees were approximately evenly split between young men and women, with some participants identifying as gender queer. Averaging just over 26 years of years of age, trainees were at varying points in their lives and careers, but all were taking some form of action to combat discrimination, persecution, indignities and inequalities in their communities. Among the top activism areas of trainees were: women's rights, youth empowerment, conflict resolution, addressing injustices and basic freedoms (such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly).



## HOLOCAUST EDUCATION & GENOCIDE PREVENTION

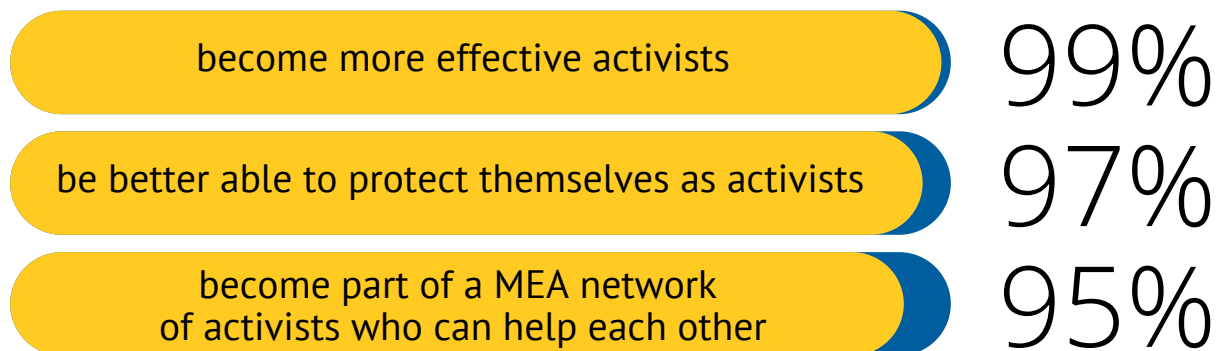
The Institute's 2021 program featured an expanded curriculum with additional lectures and exercises to teach participants about the Holocaust and other genocides. AMEL partnered with Together We Remember and The Johannesburg



Holocaust & Genocide Centre to create the 7-part module, which covered the Holocaust, the genocide in Darfur, the processes leading up to these genocides and how intolerance and discrimination can be interrupted so that they do not escalate to mass atrocities. This Module was interwoven with the broader AMEL curriculum focused on human rights and activism for peaceful and democratic change, thus connecting the dots between the interrelated topics.

## AMEL INSTITUTE - IMPACT

A total of 150 participants completed the full AMEL Institute training program and earned certificates (75% of enrollees), while another 18 completed a portion but not all of the program. Participant feedback was almost universally positive, with nearly all trainees agreeing that the program helped them to:



The program also improved participant knowledge of key topics. For example, trainee knowledge about the Holocaust significantly increased:

- **before starting the training, participants reported 3.33 out of 7 when asked “How much knowledge do you have in History of the Holocaust”;**
- **after completing the training, participants reported 5.80 out of 7, an increase of 2.47 points.**

Similarly, knowledge of Genocide History & Prevention increased by 2.53 points (from 3.24 to 5.77 out of 7). Knowledge increases in all other topic areas was also recorded, although baseline knowledge was higher, thus producing slightly smaller point increases. Positive program impact was also evident in the answers to open-ended questions. To cite just one example, when asked at the end of the program “How have you already used what you learned”, a trainee from **Nigeria** wrote:

*“First of all, the story of the Holocaust motivated me to share it with others and to motivate them on the need to stand up and prevent another.”*

## AMEL INSTITUTE - REFLECTIONS FROM A TUNISIAN TRAINEE:

“The program was extremely engaging and moving. I had the pleasure to be taught by experienced activists and experts from renowned institutions who helped me to build knowledge and skills in different activism areas. The videos and quizzes were really instructive and equipped me with the right tools to constructively and safely carry on my activism journey. What I really appreciate is **the interactive democratic environment of learning that inspired us to critically delve into the issues.** We were endowed with foundational instruments that allowed us to develop civic awareness through debate circles and fruitful breakout rooms. In each session, we were skillfully introduced to tough topics (human rights history and advocacy, activism self-care and safety, Holocaust education and non-violent movement building) where thoughts and free discussions were elaborated with a genuine and ice-breaking manner. The learning environment was enlightening and the circulation of ideas were respected and guaranteed within the frame of freedom of expression. We were given the opportunity to share thoughts and exchange experiences and most importantly to **learn from each other transcending geographical, cultural and religious boundaries.**”





## AMEL INSTITUTE - REGIONAL REACH

The AMEL Institute is open to activists from anywhere in the Middle East or Africa. The 2021 cohort included trainees from:

Algeria  
Cameroon  
Chad  
Egypt  
Ethiopia  
Ghana  
Iraq  
Israel  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
Liberia  
Libya  
Malawi  
Morocco  
Nigeria  
Palestine  
Qatar  
Saudi Arabia  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
South Africa  
South Sudan  
Sudan  
Syria  
Tanzania  
Togo  
Tunisia  
Uganda  
United Arab Emirates  
Yemen  
Zambia  
Zimbabwe



# SUDAN DEMOCRACY ACTION



Putting into action an original curriculum created in 2020, AMEL built the democracy knowledge of 18,000 people all across Sudan throughout 2021. The tailored curriculum features educational videos in Sudanese Arabic covering:

- human rights;
- rule of law;
- women, peace & security;
- democratic development.

Training was offered through two tracks: an intensive online course covering all topics, or stand-alone sessions of lecture + live discussion on social media aimed at providing key democracy concepts to mass audiences.

The more than 700 young men and women who completed the intensive training earned certificates and are being empowered as volunteers and ambassadors to spread AMEL's Sudan Democracy Action training to thousands more across the country. These efforts are taking both online and offline approaches, with the full course having been transformed into a Mass Open Online Course (MOOC) and a downloadable version created to serve populations with limited connectivity.

## REFLECTIONS FROM A SUDANESE TRAINEE:

“The training program has offered a deep dive into the politics of the Sudanese state from all aspects, starting with understanding the global framework for human rights and international charters of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of human beings, all the way to delving into contextualized analysis about what all of that means to Sudan during the current transition. The program was incredibly useful for us in understanding the different aspects of the transitional processes that we are currently undergoing and the requirements for its success...**I am determined to apply what I have learned by designing smart messages for strategic communication campaigns targeting youth to build their capacity to support a peaceful and democratic transition in Sudan.**”

## PARTNERSHIPS

The 2020/21 Sudan Democracy Action Project was supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) with knowledge partners including the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law (CDDRL) at Stanford University and the Democratic Thought Project in Sudan.



In late 2021, AMEL and NED teamed up once again, this time on a two-year, multi-track project to empower young leaders of the Sudanese democracy movement. Initial project progress was imperiled by the October 25th military coup that interrupted the historic democratic transition that had been underway, but training and empowerment efforts were adjusted and are now more vital than ever as the young generations in Sudan continue to mobilize fearlessly for freedom, justice and peace.

# CONNECTING LEADERS

Throughout 2021, AMEL connected and engaged 350 Alumni from more than 35 countries across Africa, the Middle East and the Global North. On a dedicated online forum, AMEL Institute Alumni continually connected with one another and the AMEL team to discuss, collaborate and share opportunities in order to take their activism and leadership to the next levels. Interactive online activities - such as “office hour” sessions, webinars and an online reunion - provided further opportunities for networking and learning.



Furthermore, AMEL Alumni were given the opportunity to intern and volunteer with AMEL to gain additional skills and experience in communications, training and mentoring. Twenty-five young leaders took up this opportunity, completing three-month engagements assisting AMEL with communication campaigns, or with the AMEL Institute Summer 2021 training program. Volunteers and interns strengthened their know-how, abilities and resumes, while gaining hands-on experience and earning certificates and letters of recommendation.



# BUILDING ALLYSHIP

AMEL continued its work in 2021 to forge and strengthen relations among diverse communities in order to build allyship around mutual human rights goals and values. In particular, AMEL served as an incubator for Advocates for Gender Equality in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA-AGE) and for the Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance (IJMA). MENA-AGE activities in 2021 focused on online campaigns and sessions - which engaged more than 12,000 - on building the capacity of young people across the region to advance gender equality.



## INTER JEWISH MUSLIM ALLIANCE (IJMA)

A formidable alliance of American Jewish and Muslim leaders, IJMA focused on tackling knowledge gaps and misperceptions among the two communities in 2021. In particular, a four-part webinar series increased awareness and mutual understanding of 215 American Jewish and Muslim professionals through interactive sessions, including open and frank discussions.

# ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2021, AMEL carried out 400+ advocacy actions to promote human rights values and to provide issue education to global policymakers and influencers about movements seeking to advance these values (e.g. in Sudan). For example, AMEL provided issue education, updates and briefings for the international community, including American, European and Middle Eastern officials, diplomats, policymakers/staffs and representatives from top civil society organizations.



AMEL's public advocacy efforts reached over 1 million across the region and the globe with campaigns about COVID-19, genocide awareness month, mental health month, human rights day, and "Orange the World: 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence". The AMEL team also advocated during 2021 on behalf of 450+ individuals and groups at risk of human rights violations or persecution in Afghanistan, Sudan, Uganda, and beyond.

# AMEL IN 2022

In 2022, AMEL will focus on training and connecting more young civic activists across Africa & the Middle East, and on advancing vital allyship and advocacy work.

## TRAINING

### AMEL Institute

Further expand the curriculum and provide regional online training program to 200 activists from 32+ countries with Alumni empowered as Recruiters/Mentors.

### Advancing Democracy

Empower young Sudanese activists to advance democracy through on- and off-line training and empowerment activities in partnership with the National Endowment for Democracy.

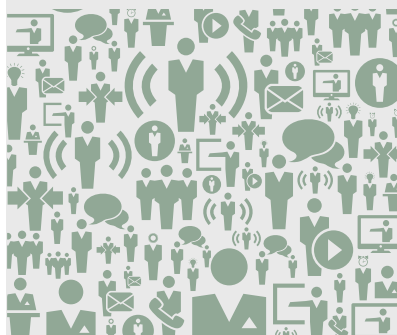
## CONNECTING

### AMEL Alumni

Deepen ties & cooperation among 500+ young civic leaders across Africa, the Middle East & the Global North.

### Building Allyship

Build and strengthen relations among diverse communities, and connect diverse leaders around shared values and objectives.



## ADVOCATING

### AMEL Advocacy

Carry out at least 600 advocacy actions, including issue education, updates and briefings for the international community, as well as mass awareness campaigns to advance human rights values.

### Protecting Human Rights

Assist and advocate for individuals and groups at risk of persecution/human rights violations across Africa, the Middle East and beyond.

# THE AMEL TEAM

## STAFF

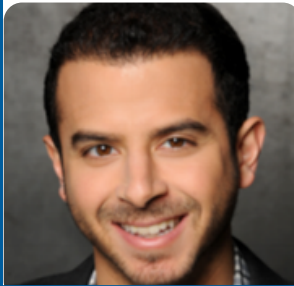


Mohamed Abubakr

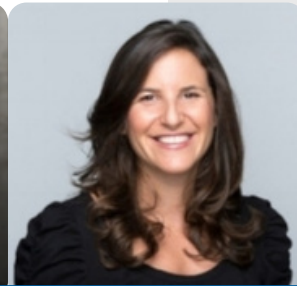


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STANFORD CENTER ON DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT, AND THE RULE OF LAW  
TOGETHER WE REMEMBER  
THE DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUM  
THE DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT PROJECT  
THE JOHANNESBURG HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER  
THE UN COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSE INITIATIVE  
**AND ACTIVISTS AND SUPPORTERS ALL OVER THE WORLD!**



1100 15th St. NW, fl 4  
Washington, DC 20005  
(703) 951-7957  
[info@amelproject.org](mailto:info@amelproject.org)

[WWW.AMELPROJECT.ORG](http://WWW.AMELPROJECT.ORG)