

For Immediate Release

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Program on Governance and Local Development Launched at Yale University with Inaugural Conference ‘Mapping Local Governance’ on May 1-2, 2014

May 3, 2014. New Haven, CT—The Program on Governance and Local Development (GLD) was launched on May 1-2 at Yale University with the inaugural conference titled “[Mapping Local Governance](#).” The Program fosters innovative research that breaks new ground in the understandings of governance and development issues focused on the Middle East. It is poised to significantly advance the theoretical and substantive understanding of governance in the region, extending research on politics and development that has primarily been state-centered, overlooking sub-national disparities that helped spark the 2011 uprisings.

The Program on Governance and Local Development will provide important insights and tools for policymakers and practitioners—both domestic and international—who seek to find solutions to the disparities and inefficient use of the region’s vast resources, improving the lives of everyday citizens. Through establishing a leading center for interdisciplinary research on Arab governance and local development, the program will bring together scholars from political science, sociology, economics, anthropology and other related fields to produce cutting edge research on local governance challenges and policies. Findings will be disseminated to a broad range of scholarly and policy audiences, in Arabic and English.

The program was made possible by a 5-year grant from the [Moulay Hicham Foundation](#), a non-profit foundation devoted to advancing innovative social science research on the Middle East and North Africa. The Carnegie Foundation has provided additional funding, supporting three Carnegie Centennial visiting scholars in 2013-2015. These include Dhafer Malouche, associate professor of Statistics at the École Supérieure de la Statistique et de l’Analyse de l’Information in Tunisia, and Mohamed Kerrou, professor of political science in the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Tunis El Manar in 2014, and Hania Sholkamy, associate professor at the Social Research Center at the American University in Cairo, in 2014-2015. The MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University and the Council on Middle East Studies, housed at the MacMillan Center, provide additional support.

The “Mapping Local Governance” conference held at Yale University on May 1-2 brought together scholars and practitioners from the Middle East and North Africa, Europe and the US to discuss the challenges facing local development, focusing on accountability and transparency, service provision, security, and dispute adjudication. For scholars, the interdisciplinary conference aimed to advance new theoretical and empirical understandings of state and non-state interactions, defining research and design solutions that assume a central place for local governance in the Middle East and North Africa. For policymakers, the conference aimed to consider relevant tools for mapping local governance, and to examine the implications of such variation on policy implementation and outcomes.

Prince Hicham Ben Abdallah of Morocco, director of the Moulay Hicham Foundation, was present at the conference and gave opening remarks. President of Yale University, Peter Salovey attended and thanked the Moulay Hicham Foundation for its generous support in helping the Program on Governance and Local Development explore the state of local governance in the Arab region.

“The program will enable the exploration of multi-disciplinary perspectives and analysis, and will certainly deepen our understanding of the opportunities and challenges of political reform and development at the local level in the Middle East,” said Salovey.

The Program’s website can be found at gld.common.yale.edu

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