Social Media in the Arab World
Transformations & Emerging Perceptions

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UNESCWA EGM, Role of ICT in Socio-Economic Development
Beirut, 9 Apr 2013

www.ArabSocialMediaReport.com – Twitter: @ArabSocialMedia
Facebook and Twitter: Exponential Growth through 2012

End 2012:

- Over 1 billion monthly active users
- 552 million daily active users.
- More than 543 million monthly active mobile users
- Has over 500 million users
- 170 million active users (log in once a month)
- Over 2 billion tweets a week,
  - 340 million tweets a day.
- Arabic is the fastest growing language

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The Arab Social Media Report Series

- **Facebook usage 2010-2012**
  - Global and Regional Rankings
  - Gender, Demographic Breakdown
  - Language Breakdown

- **Twitter usage & trends 2011/2012**
  - Twitter population
  - Tweets volume
  - Trends

- **Regional Surveys**
  - Youth Activism
  - Women Empowerment
  - Social Media Impact on society
  - Entrepreneurship / employment

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Social Media Growth in the Arab World:
Facebook Regional Snapshot

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<tr>
<td>Users:</td>
<td>18.7 m</td>
<td>34.5 m</td>
<td>50 m</td>
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<td>Penetration:</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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Impact of Arab uprisings on Facebook Growth

Grew 30% in Q1 of 2011
Compared to 15-18% in Q1 2010 & Q1 2012
Penetration in the Arab World -
Sep. 2012

- 2 GCC countries (UAE, Qatar), plus Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia dominate the top five Arab FB users as percentage of population.

- 70% of users under 30
- 33% are women

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Breakdown of Facebook Users in the GCC: Sep. 2012

- Almost **78%** of Facebook users in the GCC are in **Saudi Arabia and the UAE**.
Arabic: The fastest growing language
Language Breakdown in the GCC:
Facebook User Interface Preference – May 2012

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Twitter in the Arab World:
Number of Active Users by Country – June 2012

- Over 2.1 million active users
- 172.5 million Tweets
- Approximately 130 Tweets per person.
- 5.75 million per day
Twitter in the Arab World:
Percentage of Tweets – March 2012

- Kuwait: 34%
- Saudi Arabia: 29%
- UAE: 9%
- Egypt: 11%
- Bahrain: 5%
- Remaining Countries: 12%

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Percentage of Tweets by Language – GCC
March 2012

Kuwait
- English: 20%
- Arabic: 77%
- Other: 3%

Saudi
- English: 24%
- Arabic: 71%
- Other: 5%

Bahrain
- English: 32%
- Arabic: 58%
- Other: 0%

Qatar
- English: 39%
- Arabic: 56%
- Other: 5%

Egypt
- English: 45%
- Arabic: 49%
- Other: 6%

Oman
- English: 52%
- Arabic: 40%
- Other: 8%

UAE
- English: 57%
- Arabic: 36%
- Other: 7%
Top Twitter Trends in the Arab Region

(Feb. 2011)

(Mar. 2012)

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Perceptions & Transformations in the Arab World

Arab Social Media Report Surveys

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1- Impact on Culture & Identity

Stronger Social Connections?

I feel more connected to my community and society through social networking tools (%)

- Bahrain: 93%
- Kuwait: 90%
- Oman: 86%
- Saudi Arabia: 85%
- UAE: 83%

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Understanding Society Better?

I feel I understand my society better after interacting with fellow citizens through social networking tools (%)

- Bahrain: 85%
- Kuwait: 86%
- Oman: 79%
- Saudi Arabia: 79%
- UAE: 76%

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Contribution to Society?

I feel my contribution to my society has increased through using social networking tools (%)

- Bahrain: 78
- Kuwait: 83
- Oman: 77
- Saudi Arabia: 75
- UAE: 71
2- Enhancing Flow of Information from Citizens to Government?

Do you feel you can freely express your political views using social media? – Q3 2011

[Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and UAE for different reasons they might feel restricted in expressing their views online.]

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Egypt: Internet Traffic (Jan 28 to Feb 2, 2011)

– Google as a sample

Source: Google.com

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Primary Impact of Blocking the Internet during Civil Movements – Q1 2011

No impact: Shutting off the Internet or blocking Facebook did not have any impact on the civil movement

Negative (disrupted the main communication channel people were using to organize and communicate with each other)

Positive (making people more determined, pushing undecided people to be more active, mobilizing people to find creative ways to organize and communicate)

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Egypt
- No impact: 15.87%
- Negative: 27.78%
- Positive: 56.35%

Tunisia
- No impact: 12.38%
- Negative: 28.57%
- Positive: 59.05%

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3- A Tool for Arab Women Empowerment?

Closing the ‘Virtual’ Gender Gap?
Social Media: a Gender Equalizer?

Environmental vs. Personal factors

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4- Social Media use by Politicians & Political Campaigns - Q1 2011

No Impact: Use of social media will not impact my vote

Negative: Less likely to vote for candidates who use social media

Positive: More likely to vote for candidate who uses social media to connect with citizens

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5- Impact on Employment, Entrepreneurship & Social Entrepreneurship?
Reducing Risks Associated with Entrepreneurship

- Reducing the cost/time for reaching out to larger customer base
- Creating a more ‘entrepreneurial’ generation by integrating collaborative and innovative networking tools
- Reducing mismatch between planning and implementation by enabling better research on market trends
- Providing real-time view of personal behavior of stakeholders
- Lowering costs/overhead (associated with creating a business)
- Providing role models and diminishing stigma of instability/failure associated with start-ups
- Minimizing financial losses by crowd-sourcing financial support from a wider network
Impact of social media on entrepreneurship and social change

Social media is seen as an important tool for social enterprises by 89% of respondents.

- Social media helped promote/support/drive entrepreneurial initiatives in my country: 43
- I am more open to collaboration and work on community-driven projects: 40
- I now feel I work better within teams: 39
- I feel empowered to create my own employment opportunities: 38
- I feel empowered to influence social change through my own enterprise: 34
- Other: 5

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