



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SNAPSHOT

Libyan City Cleans Up and Moves Forward



USAID/Libya

Kids in Benghazi play at a park that was recently improved by Ayadina, a local civil society organization that is supported by USAID.

April 2014 – In downtown Benghazi, a dark and deserted playground is now bustling with life. Fathers and mothers bring their children to play, laugh, and enjoy a safe space in a city that has been wracked by violence and volatility since Libya’s revolution ended three years ago. With four schools in the surrounding area, teachers now bring their students to the park for physical education classes.

The park is part of an ongoing, USAID-supported campaign to empower local activists to reclaim their community, revitalize their city, and spark positive change. The project was led by Ayadina, a women-led civil society organization that seeks to support and engage youth in Benghazi. As part of the activity, Ayadina also spearheaded a campaign to clean up Benghazi’s littered beachfront, raise awareness of the importance of environmental protection, and distribute information material on the development of Libya’s new constitution.

In September 2013, Ayadina began preparing for a series of beach cleanup campaigns in the Al Qaryah, Al Seyahia, Sidi Khalifa, and Al Sabri areas of Benghazi. The events attracted a lot of attention and participation from the wider Benghazi community. Eighty six Boy Scouts participated and local businesspeople donated 40 metal garbage bins that were placed along the shorefront. The campaign spread to the sea, as four scuba divers joined with Ayadina and collected waste underwater

The activity drew media attention too. Both Libya Al-Ahar TV and al-Rasmiya TV filmed and interviewed the organizers of the cleanup campaign. These and other media outlets were interested in the campaign, and subsequently reported on other efforts undertaken by the grantee, increasing public awareness and participation in this campaign.

Ayadina sees these types of visible, practical community improvement projects as a platform to promote civic engagement in the political transition as well. As a result, they used the campaigns as an opportunity to hand out flyers with basic information on constitutional principles and processes prior to the election of a Constitution Drafting Assembly that will be tasked with writing Libya’s first new constitution in forty years.

Ayadina continues to be very active in its clean-up campaigns around Benghazi. They are building up a network of activist by teaming up with different, well-established groups such as the Benghazi Diving Center (BDC), Service Marine Rescue Unit, Libyan Society for the Protection of Marine Biology, Red Crescent, and Boys Scouts.

Dr. Haneia Muftah Gamatti, chairperson of Ayadina said, “We have received a lot of positive feedback from community residents. I see the activity at the park and know that we have done something good that will contribute to improving Benghazi.”

Contact: Andrew Tangye, Program Manager, e-mail: atangye@usaid.gov
telephone: (202) 712-1478 Web: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: OTI

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Follow us! @usaidoti

Visit us! <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/promoting-peaceful-political-transitions>