

“ASREN is a non-profit company with limited liability (GmbH) and is officially registered in Germany, under the umbrella of the League of Arab States. The main goal is to connect Arab institutions among themselves and to the globe through high-speed data-communications networks. Such networks will enable sharing and access to a variety of R&E services and applications in addition to utilization of highly sophisticated and technologically advanced computing resources available only at very few institutions in the world.”

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Abu-Ghazaleh: AfricaConnect2 project for the ASREN Region concludes with a great success



Throughout the past 6 years (July 2015-May2021), the AfricaConenct2 project has been recognized as one of the most impactful projects implemented by the Arab States Research and education Network (ASREN) in North Africa, with generous co-funding from the European Commission and great support of the pan European research and education network (GÉANT). That is in addition to the successful partnership with the sister African regional research and education networks; the Ubuntunet Alliance and the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN).

The overall objective of AfricaConnect2 was to contribute to the reduction of poverty, brain drain and digital divide by unlocking the potential of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) for sustainable development in Africa, by improving connectivity, both within the region, and to the global research and education community. Africa Connect2 Followed the Roadmap of the 4th EU-Africa Summit which recognizes the strategic role of ‘virtual’ infrastructures enabled by ICT.

Under this project, ASREN provided high-speed, high-quality, connectivity for the research and education communities in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Algeria with the pan European network GÉANT. ASREN also established a full-fledged Network Operation Center (NOC) in London and equipped it with all necessary hardware and software to manage the network established across many Arab countries. The project also helped ASREN to launch its cloud-based services that include Infrastructure-as-a-Service, Software-as-a-Service and Computing-as-a-Service.

In cooperation with the project partners, ASREN worked on developing capacities in the region through conducting national and regional workshops. This includes women empowerment as well as engaging with user communities, especially those which are working on earth observation and climate change, radio astronomy and biodiversity.

On this occasion, HE Dr. Talal Abu Ghazaleh, ASREN Chairman, said: “We are very proud of our achievements in providing the best services to our research and education communities especially under the AfricaConenct2 project, with great thanks to the European Union, GÉANT network and the African partners for their significant support. A key objective for ASREN during the following project phase, AfricaConnect3, is to play an important role in developing a cost-effective backbone for the Arab countries in North Africa, towards a long-term objective of establishing a pan-Arab regional backbone network under the ‘ArabConnect’ initiative.”

Interview with Jauad El Kharraz, Secretary-General of ArabWAYS, on empowering young Arab scientists

Moroccan researcher Dr. Jauad El Kharraz is one of the active scientists in promoting scientific culture and supporting Arab scientific researchers through the Arab World Association of Young Scientists (ArabWAYS), which has been in existence for more than 10 years.

Know all about ArabWAYS and the work it has been doing for the past years to empower young Arab scientists with Jauad El Kharraz.



How did ArabWAYS start? What was the moment that motivated you to initiate it?

Arab World Association of Young Scientists (ArabWAYS) started officially with a group of friends: Dr. Alaa El-Sadek from Egypt, Dr. Olfa Mahjoub from Tunisia and myself from Morocco when we met at Biovision conference in April 2010 at Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt. We met there with an important number of young scientists from so many Arab countries, and we decided to keep this gathering alive through the creation of an umbrella that could host all of us and help all the community of young scientists in our Arab countries, in particular when we realized that there were no such networks and it was a real need.



Prior to 2010, the idea of ArabWAYS came actually from the World Academy of Young Scientists (WAYS) that launched its Arab branch at the first Arab regional meeting held in 2005 in Alexandria, Egypt. In 2017 at the World Science Forum held at the Dead Sea (Jordan), ArabWAYS was recognized officially as a branch of WAYS in the Arab region, and we were invited to the following edition of the World Science Forum in Budapest as such, and it was Dr. Ola Al-Zein from Lebanon who led our delegation.

Our enthusiasm in formulating the “Arab World Association of Young Scientists” received an overwhelming support that is given to us in good faith and in hope for us to participate in interpreting the vision of our region into a positive reality. This throws a big responsibility on each member in helping our Association prosper through the realization of its goals. The Association continuous success will always be realized through your dedication and determination in leaving a legacy that makes all Arabs proud for generations to come.

Tell us more about ArabWAYS and the work that it does to empower young Arab scientists.

The objective of ArabWAYS is to contribute towards strengthening the capacity of young Arab researchers to conduct relevant and high quality research that covers science and technology, environment, and their inter-linkages, and to advance science and enhance the situation of young scientists throughout the Arab world.

Our work consists in assisting all Arab young scientists from all scientific backgrounds (natural sciences, social sciences, humanities), and offer them a platform where they can exchange and build collaborations, joint scientific works, projects, and find responses to their questions, find models or what we called in UNESCO Science Report 2015 champions of science, who can inspire them to follow their path and steps.

A countless number of collaborations and networks have been built thanks to our platform, and a countless number of workshops, seminars and webinars were organized by us directly or indirectly. We have been a reference for all young scientists in the last 10 years where many found opportunities that shaped their professional or academic careers (job opportunities, postdoc or PhD scholarships, training courses, scientific visits, awards, etc.).

Thematic groups were created to boost networking and collaborations between Arab young scientists in specific fields. We built a database of thousands of young scientists amongst which we count on experts in robotics, remote sensing, biotechnology, nanotechnology, renewable energies, climate change, water resources, marine sciences, agriculture, ICT, social sciences, gender, history, geography, geology, paleontology, bacteriology, linguistics, architecture, chemistry, theoretical physics, mathematics, earth sciences, cosmology, medicine, civil engineering, etc.

Those services we believe they definitely contribute to empowering our community of Arab young scientists and strengthen their capacities. In addition, several orientation and guidance services are offered by email, and we keep the community informed about the latest advances in science, the technology cutting edge news and an important number of opportunities offered by international, regional and national entities (governmental, academia, industry, NGOs, international organizations, funding agencies, etc.).

Now, 10 years later, what are your greatest achievements? How have ArabWAYS made a difference?

During the 10 years since its creation, ArabWAYS could consolidate it as a reference for all Arab young scientists. We are present in the main regional forums and conferences, and we could mobilize around 20.000 members which benefit from our services.

We got the official recognition from WAYS at the World Science Forum 2017 in Jordan as representative of WAYS in the Arab region.

We became a reference at many key events such as: the World Science Forum, the Arab-American Frontiers of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, the Arab Science Week that we co-organized its first edition in 2020 and we are going to co-organize the second edition in 2021 as well, we contributed to the UNESCO Science Report 2015 (Arab countries), and may other important regional and international key publications and policy briefs.

The number of members who benefited from our services and got scholarships, jobs, awards, offered scientific visits... etc. is difficult to count but we accumulated an important number of feedbacks that prove it and we are proud we can help that way our members and empower them.

Among the most prominent obstacles facing scientific research in the Arab world is poor funding. How do you deal with that?

Indeed, financial means are among the most prominent obstacles facing scientific research in our Arab world. But this is not an excuse, several countries around the world with less resources than our Arab countries are doing well when it comes to science production and research outputs. We think that there are several mechanisms and tools that can alleviate the absence of consequent financial resources, such as: boosting collaboration between Arab universities and research centers, build one common infrastructure for multiple uses in different centers and countries, encourage incubators for the training of young scientists and entrepreneurs, encourage PPP approaches (public-private partnerships), and even PPPP (-people) which could work well in our region. In

addition, it is important to optimize the little budgets we have in the fields of national priority and that do not require consequent investments, and where we can build localization efforts and achieve cost recovery.

Collaboration with the developed countries is also useful if we carry out within a sound strategy and according to a clear vision. For example, encourage industries of developed countries to get installed in our countries and we impose them a high rate of local workers and the obligation of training them, use local capacities and allocate part of their gains to R&D and collaborations with local research centers and universities, apart from data sharing, and request high TRL KPIs, etc.

Finally, encouraging our diaspora who can bring their knowledge, companies, institutions and connections to bring added values and success to R&D projects in our countries. But again, all this should be designed with a sound strategy that takes into consideration the whole value chain of R&D and innovation schemes.

Where do you see ArabWAYS going in the next five to ten years? Do you have a perspective or any particular view on how you would see it developing over the coming years and where it is going to be then?

ArabWAYS needs a refreshment of its current leaders including myself, we need to give place to a new generation of young researchers with talent, passion, motivation and energy to dedicate it to take ArabWAYS to another level in the upcoming 10 years. My personal idea is to establish a new basis and use ArabWAYS as an organization that could participate at national, regional and international projects, and can bring financial resources to serve its action plan. This can only be done if a new board can work hardly on that and use the networks we built to bring projects and partner in different programs such as H2020, PRIMA, and many other national and regional programs where ArabWAYS has a potential to bring a real added value and a strong contribution. That way, we can ensure a certain financial sustainability for the organization and make it more efficient and ensure the sustainability of our activities as well. In addition, this is the only way to make us part of designing national, regional and international science policies where we can advocate for a better status of our young scientists and ensure them a bright future, and keep our status as an active organization among all the key organizations such as: TWAS, ICSU, IAS, GYA, SASTA, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, UNESCO, ICESCO, IsDB, FIKR, etc.

What inspirational message would you give to young scientist in the Arab world?

Nowadays, the digital transformation that we are witnessing in all our life aspects is a great opportunity for our young scientists. No one can now argue that she or he could not advance its research or scientific career because of financial resources or because of corruption. Indeed, we are still suffering from those problems in our Arab world, but the amount of opportunities that are offered thanks to the access to internet and the knowledge offered in countless platforms and networks, is limitless. The only required thing is to use those opportunities in a good way and take advantage of networks such as ours to connect to the right information and the right opportunities, and as someone said wisely: There was never a night or a problem that could defeat sunrise or hope. Keep your hopes up.

Three NRENs connect to the WACREN backbone - for unlimited possibilities



Hundreds of thousands of researchers, lecturers and students in Benin, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire will now be able to take their research and education to the next level as the national RENs in the three countries have successfully connected to the WACREN backbone and ready to relay digital services institutions of higher learning and research centres.

The connections by RBER (Benin), FasoREN (Burkina Faso) and RITER (Côte d'Ivoire) come under the just-ended €26.6m European Commission co-funded AfricaConnect2 (AC2). AC2 was a project aimed at advancing research and education in Africa by connecting national research and education networks to a world-class data communications network.

WACREN's engineers have successfully completed tests on the 10-year long-term leased links to WACREN PoPs in Abidjan, Cotonou and Ouagadougou last month.

The circuits will potentially connect more than 100 higher education institutions in the three countries to themselves, regional peers in WACREN, and the global community through a peering with the pan-European GÉANT network.

Read more at: <https://wacren.net/en/news/hat-trick-three-nrens-connect-to-the-wacren-backbone-for-unlimited-possibilities/>

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LAPTOPS

TAGITOP®-UNI C

- Intel Celeron N4100
- GPU: Intel UHD Graphics 600
- 4 GB LPDDR3 RAM
- Storage: 256 GB SSD + 64 GB EMMC
- 1x USB 3.0, 2x USB 2.0, 1 MINI-HDMI, RJ45



- 4800 mAh
- 14.1" FHD
- Built in Camera
- AC Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0



JD 215
VAT Included

TAGITOP®-UNI

- Intel Core i3 5th Gen (5005U)
- GPU: Intel HD graphics 5500
- 8 GB DDR3L RAM
- Storage: SSD 128 GB + HDD 512 GB
- 1x USB 3.0 1x USB 2.0, 1x Type C, 1x HDMI
- Backlit Keyboard



Fabric Sleeve Case



- 4000 mAh
- 14.1" FHD
- Built in Camera
- Fingerprint
- AC Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.0



JD 290
VAT Included

TAGITOP®-EDU

- Intel Core i3 10th Gen (1005G1)
- GPU: Intel® UHD
- 4 GB RAM DDR4
- Storage: 128 GB SSD
- 2x USB 3.1, 1x Type C, 1x HDMI, RJ45



**Carry bag | USB mouse
Rubber cover**



- 4290 mAh
- 14" FHD
- Built in Camera
- AC Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.2



JD 340
VAT Included

TAGITOP®-FLIP

- Intel Core i5 8th Gen (8259U)
- GPU: Intel® Iris® Plus Graphics 655
- 8 GB DDR4 RAM
- Storage: 256 GB SSD
- 1x USB 3.1, 1x Type C, 1x HDMI
- Backlit Keyboard



- 7000 mAh
- 14.1" FHD
Screen ten points touch
- Built in Camera
- Fingerprint
- AC Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 4.2



JD 465
VAT Included

