

Sawti Initiative Promotes Active Citizenship, Highlighting Alternative Parties and Encouraging Lebanese Everywhere to Participate in the Political Process

March 11, 2021 - Sawti, a grassroots initiative started within Impact Lebanon promoting active citizenship among Lebanese people, today announced that its online platform has officially launched and can be accessed at www.sawtivoice.org. The result of months of research and preparation, the platform seeks to serve as a primary resource hub that will encourage Lebanese people worldwide to become more politically active, learn about, engage with and join alternative political parties, and better understand how the Lebanese state functions.

In addition to providing content that more broadly encourages active citizenship, Sawti seeks to start its journey by playing a pivotal role in driving voter turnout—both in Lebanon and abroad—in the upcoming general elections in Lebanon, which are expected to be held in May 2022, through increased access to information regarding alternative parties and Lebanese electoral politics generally.

A major component of Sawti's platform is disseminating information that will allow Lebanese people to "explore the alternative," which involves featuring alternative political parties that adhere to Sawti's strict vetting criteria. These criteria¹ include:

1. Being non-sectarian and secular
2. Not being linked to the current political establishment
3. Not having participated in the civil war
4. Not being accountable to a foreign country or agenda
5. Having electoral aspirations and a detailed electoral program
6. Being democratic in nature, ideology, and governance
7. Being financially transparent
8. Actively upholding and striving toward equality for all members of Lebanese society

Furthermore, Sawti's ambassador program² is mobilising Lebanese people both in Lebanon and abroad to promote the principles of active citizenship, spread awareness on the political programs of alternative parties and encourage participation in the upcoming election among their own communities. Sawti provides training materials, informational guides and support to ensure that anyone is able to participate and increase access to information regarding topics ranging from reclaiming citizenship and voter registration to who the alternative political parties are and the importance of political participation.

Sawti looks forward to building upon the online presence it has established so far through its social media pages with today's official launch of its website to further work towards its vision and goals.

¹The full, detailed vetting criteria can be accessed at <https://www.sawtivoice.org/8valuescriteria>.

²Information regarding Sawti's ambassador programme can be accessed at <https://www.sawtivoice.org/sawti-ambassador-program>.

About Sawti

Sawti, which means both “my voice” and “my vote” in Arabic, is a volunteer-led grassroots initiative started within Impact Lebanon that aims to promote active citizenship among Lebanese people around the world. Sawti was established and is led by volunteers with no political affiliations that are based around the world that met through Impact Lebanon. These volunteers come from diverse professional and educational backgrounds, including law, science, engineering, international development, public policy, journalism, and media and communications. For more information, visit us at www.sawtivoice.org.

About Impact Lebanon

Impact Lebanon is a non-profit organisation that brings the community together to pursue initiatives that deliver impact for Lebanon. Our process is to encourage the brainstorming of ideas; promote the sharing of knowledge, resources and expertise; and build strong teams to turn an idea into a successful initiative. For more information, visit us at www.impactlebanon.org.

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