



WEEK OF COMPASSION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT

For Global Ministries

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Compassion.*

SECTION 1: Basic Information

Area Office	Middle East and Europe
Date of Proposal Submission	Fall 2019
Project Title	Religion and State – Middle East
Project Period	2020
Name of Local Partner	Diyar Consortium
Location- <i>City/State/Country</i>	Bethlehem, Palestine
Total Amount Received from WoC	\$10,000.00
Person Completing Report	The report was written by the Diyar Consortium and prepared by Global Ministries.
Contact Information <i>Phone, email</i>	Peter Makari Executive for Middle East and Europe, Global Ministries makarip@ucc.org

SECTION 2: Project Summary

Project Goal:

In summary, the goal of the Religion and State project is to promote more peaceful and inclusive societies in the Middle East that ensure gender equality, human dignity, justice and freedom. It is a focused program on issues of justice, peace, and sustainable development.

The Religion and State Project was launched in 2008 as a regional educational and community development initiative. It has several components: education, advocacy, training and empowering of minorities and women, human security, and addressing religious and gender discrimination as some of the root causes of poverty, hunger, and marginalization. It aims at improving the quality of life for all through working toward community members' full citizenship and fuller social and economic participation. The program has continued with a remarkable degree of progress and success for the purpose of engaging in issues of human rights, religious freedom, equal citizenship, gender justice, sustainable human development (with a major focus on youth, as they are among the most vulnerable segment of populations in the Arab World), human dignity, and quality of life.

In 2019, the program continued to provide youth training workshops, with an emphasis on building inclusive and interfaith communities. In 2020, the new focus of the program and ongoing dialog among youth in the Middle East has been centered on Gender Equality, and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (UN Sustainable Development Goals #5 and #6).

Primary Activities Implemented

1. The Religion and State project team (Project manager Dr. Inas Deeb, communications officer Ms. Rana Abu Farha, and Project Coordinator/International Consultant Rev. Victor Makari) created a new coordination plan in the middle of 2020, which recruited and appointed five youth coordinators (one for each of the project locations) who make up a youth leadership team. These mature, young women and men have, proven to be committed, energetic, creative, and extremely enthusiastic and reliable through their participation in previous or similar workshops.
2. A new logo, Facebook page, and website were created, offering an "application form" to be filled by new young persons to join this project. Already, large numbers of promising participants have applied.
3. The project team and youth leadership team hold weekly Zoom meetings to brainstorm their ideas and help in organizing either in-person or virtual workshops, to fulfill the earlier-made training event plans.
4. The project team and youth leadership team have now planned and are preparing to carry out several in-person workshops
 - a. An in-person workshop in Palestine (the Occupied West Bank) in late October 2020, with hopes to have another held in Bethlehem- this October
 - b. An in-person workshop is planned and will take place in Lebanon in early October.
 - c. The project and youth leadership teams also hope to hold trainings in Egypt and Jordan toward the end of October. If the COVID-19 pandemic does not permit in-person meetings for these trainings, virtual workshops will be considered.

Challenges and Actions Steps Taken to Resolve

Summarize what organizational and environmental (political, social, infrastructural, etc.) challenges arose during this past year that hindered the project achievement of its goals. Also, include how the project/program addressed them.

Because the original plan for this project necessitated the travel and in-person gathering for the planning and execution of the training workshops, the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges to this project. The project team addressed these issues by recruiting youth leadership team members already present in each one of the project locations. The project team and youth leadership team were then able to meet virtually to re-organize and plan new workshops later in 2020. If all currently planned and organized trainings are carried out, all original trainings planned will still be carried out during 2020.

SECTION 3: Project Results

Client/Participant Success Story or Details of a Program Achievement

Please share a client success story or a program achievement from this project. The success story or the program achievement should be related to program activities implemented and should convey the need or impact of the project. If using a client/participant success story, please keep client confidentiality in mind. If available, include pictures as attachments to your report.

Short- and Long-Term Results

Realistically link program activities to the difference they are making. Describe how the project's activities are making a difference in the short and long-term for both the client and the community.

The continued energy for the Religion and State project despite the pause to meet in-person for events has been encouraging. The recruitment of youth leaders for the project in different regions and the ability to make new plans in light of the health and safety for all who participate in the program has been successfully coordinated. The interest of the project for young people in the region continues to remain strong.

Best Practices:

Please Identify and Describe processes or practices that you implemented in this project that were successful, and that you recommend for use in similar situations.

There are several practices which have led to success for the Religion and State Project as its leaders have worked to plan and carry out trainings around the region. Recruiting quality youth leaders who were known to be committed and energetic, in addition to living in each of the areas the project hoped to carry out a training was crucial. Consistent, weekly meetings between the project leaders and youth leadership team were important in generating ideas and planning the trainings to be carried out this October. The use of social media marketing to help recruit future youth leaders has been an important step in planning for the future. Each of these practices have had to be learned and adapted to by the project team amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Quantitative Results

Provide "numeric indicators" of your work in serving people and implementing project activities.

The grant funds were requested for the in-person workshops and gatherings of the Religion and State project. Once these activities have been completed, a report on the number of participants and the impacts of these activities will be provided.

PEOPLE Served <i>Avoid Duplicate Counts between Categories</i>	# of People Served	Comments or Description
Women age 18+		
Men age 18+		
Youth age 13-18		
Children age 0-13		
Families/Households		
Disabled		
Other: <i>specify such as employed, unemployed, immigrants, etc.</i>		

ACTIVITIES Implemented <i>-Specify Activities-</i>	# of Activities or Service Units	# of Participants or Beneficiaries <i>If applicable</i>	Comments or Description

Examples of Activity Descriptions: food distribution, legal assistance, trainings, workshops, clinical services, TB screening, intakes, pigs raised, wells dug, school supplies provided (units), etc.

SECTION 4: Financial Management

Required Attachment: How was funding used?

Provide a financial report of how gifts were put to use in support of your project. A template for this financial report is attached for your reference. Any report that does not follow this template will not be considered a completed report and not eligible for applying for WOC Sustainable Development grant.

If expenses differ from the original proposal, please explain variances here:

A complete financial report will be provided once the gatherings take place. This portion of the project was postponed due to the health and safety of all participants in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.