



WEEK OF COMPASSION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT

For Global Ministries

*Please type or print clearly. Return electronically to Week of
Compassion.*

SECTION 1: Basic Information

Area Office	<i>Bethlehem, Palestine</i>
Date of Proposal Submission	August 30, 2019
Project Title	<i>Religion and State – Middle East</i>
Project Period	January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020
Name of Local Partner	<i>Diyar Consortium</i>
Location- City/State/Country	<i>The project is implemented in Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon.</i>
Total Amount Received from WoC	\$10,000.00 USD
Person Completing Report	This proposal was written by Rana Khoury of Diyar Consortium and prepared by Global Ministries Resource Development.

<p>Contact Information</p> <p><i>Phone, email</i></p>	<p>Kelsey Cameron Rose 317-713-2571 kcameron@dom.disciples.org</p>
--	--

SECTION 2: Project Summary

Project Goal

Referring back to your original proposal, what is the overall goal of the project? If your plans have changed from the original proposal, please describe.

The overall goal of the project is to contribute to promoting more peaceful and inclusive societies in the Middle East that ensure gender equality, human dignity, justice and freedom. This project is placed within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Agenda and UN's Sustainable Development Goals #5 (Gender Equality) and #16 (Promote Just, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies) framework, so that marginalized groups, especially women, youth and the poor, are assured of their human dignity and abundant living.

Primary Activities Implemented

Describe administrative and programmatic activities implemented in your request for funding.

Four leadership and capacity building workshops in Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon were implemented in 2020 as the primary activities. Despite the extremely difficult conditions due largely to the Covid-19 pandemic, these empowerment workshops were held with in-person attendance while ensuring strict adherence to the health safety measures. We had 86 young participants, with 47 young women participants and 39 young men trainees between the ages of 19 to 35 years old; therefore, the majority were women with almost 55% participation rate. The number of participants was also considerably higher than originally planned and proposed, for the estimated original target group number stood at 60 participants. This increase in participation is indicative of the project's successful strategy and practice in enlisting members and at the same time the popularity and effectiveness of such forums, especially among young people.

The following is a short description of each workshop, presented in a chronological sequence:

1. Palestine Workshop entitled "Youth Leadership Training Workshop on Volunteerism for Societal Change": The workshop was held over a two-day period with an overnight, between October 23 to October 24, 2020 in Bethlehem, Palestine. There were 25 young men and women who came from diverse areas and localities in Palestine, representing multiple professional and educational backgrounds, as well as faiths.

The workshop in Palestine focused on enhancing the awareness of the young participants with regard to being proactive citizens, in addition to increasing understanding of the values of gender equality and justice, pluralism, inclusivity and volunteerism. The overall goal was to help young people on conceiving and establishing community initiatives that serve all and promote social change. As part of the training, the

young participants met with four founders of already existing and successful community initiatives to hear about their experiences, challenges, motivation, and rewards of engaging in these undertakings. A major outcome of this workshop was that a total of four initiatives emerged, the details of which will be shared in the section on project results.

2. Jordan Workshop entitled “Cyber Bullying and Its Impact on Citizenship”: The workshop was held in Amman, Jordan for a full day on October 29, 2020 with 20 participants, 12 young women and 8 young men. Again, the participants represented different districts, professional specializations, academic backgrounds and faiths.

The workshop aimed at raising the awareness of the young participants on how to employ the values of citizenship and pluralism to counter and challenge hate speech and bullying, especially in social media. The workshop also included a session on the role of religion in decreasing and preventing cyber bullying, which was filled with animated and vibrant discussions. Among the main outcomes of this workshop was the commitment that the participants made to challenge cyber bullying through the values of citizenship and pluralism, and the preliminary design of online initiatives to meet their commitments.

3. Egypt Workshop entitled “Inclusion and Pluralism in Egypt”: The workshop was held in Cairo, Egypt for a full day on November 20, 2020 with 17 participants, 9 young women and 8 young men. The participants were of multiple backgrounds and localities, professionals, recent graduates as well as students, activists and both Muslims and Christians. Several young people with disabilities also partook in the workshop.

The workshop aimed at examining the Egyptian context and the challenges of religious, social and political inclusion, and providing tools to address and challenge discrimination and exclusion and promote pluralism. Several participants who are activists shared their initiatives with the rest of the trainees to inspire similar undertakings and work together on joint efforts.

4. Lebanon Workshop entitled “Beirut Explosion: A Story of Pain and Hope”: Due to the extremely difficult political situation in Lebanon, aside from the pandemic, the workshop was delayed until December 5, 2020. It was a full-day activity with 24 participants, 10 females and 14 males. The participants represented various academic and professional backgrounds, including journalists, lawyers, writers, artists, engineers, and few university students.

The workshop concentrated on ways to deal with crisis while continuing to be civically engaged and capable of moving forward and involved in the community. A demonstration of some of the tools that can help turn the pain and helplessness into hope and active involvement were shared in the different sessions, including art, non-violent communication, dialogue, search for common grounds and understandings while celebrating differences, and crisis management.

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.

The project met its stated goals during 2020. However, it was challenging to do so due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The workshops are usually organized during the summer as many of the young people participating are on university and work holidays; this year, however, the timing of the workshop was delayed to further study the conditions and see if in-person gatherings could take place. Once the restrictions eased during late fall in the different project countries, Diyar was able to hold the four workshops but with strict adherence to the health measures. Changes nevertheless, had to happen as the Jordan workshop in the past was hosted together with participants from Palestine rather than two

separate workshops. In the past, this allowed for meaningful exchanges among the young people and strengthened the ties between both groups. Due to visa restrictions, this is not possible for Egyptian and Lebanese participants. Regrettably, a combined event for Jordan and Palestine could not be implemented in 2020.

Diyar Consortium decided to delay the timing of the workshops until in-person sessions could take place instead of virtual events. However, Diyar Consortium was prepared to have these workshops online, through digital applications and forums, if the restrictions persisted.

A second and important part of the project strategy that was implemented, which successfully led to achieving the project goals and realizing results, was to identify key, active persons who participated in former project activities as focal persons/coordinators and initiate youth chapters in each project country. These youth chapters include members who are former and current project participants to work on the issues deemed relevant through this project, including citizenship, pluralism, inclusiveness, gender equality, community initiatives, and volunteerism. A total of five focal persons were identified, with two women and three men who represent the different project countries, to coordinate and develop the chapters further. A steering committee comprised of the focal persons and coordinators was formed on a regional level to maintain synergy among the group members, solicit new chapter members, set priorities for topics to address, organize, engage in online discussions, envision and implement community actions (such as in Lebanon after the August explosion where many volunteered in the clean-up operations), work independently on developing new initiatives, and act as a liaison between the young people and the project staff and administration so that the Diyar Consortium was made aware of their needs.

Another challenge that was particular to Lebanon was the political situation and the August Beirut explosion that made implementation of any activity almost impossible. However, and as mentioned earlier, having the young coordinator in Lebanon was key to ensuring that a workshop could be held there, supported by other young people who were committed to the vision and mission of this initiative.

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.

There are three program achievements and two success stories to share:

The first program achievement is the creation of the youth chapters that allowed for the representation of young people at the decision-making level, empowering them to work independently and enhancing the overall project effectiveness in meeting its goals. The establishing of the youth chapters allowed for the workshops to be held in three of the project countries (Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon) without the presence of the project staff who are in Palestine when travel was not permitted, with successful results and extraordinary engagement and commitment on the part of the workshop participants.

The second program achievement that is an outcome of the first achievement is the increase in the number of participants in the workshops. As shared in an earlier section, the original proposed number was 60 persons, whereas the number of participants at these workshops exceeded all expectations and

stood at 86 young women and men. The steering committee with its focal persons were successful in attracting and enrolling young participants, especially females as the majority of participants were comprised of young women, who are enthusiastic and motivated to work on the project issues and mission.

The third significant achievement was the implementation of the Egypt workshop. Egypt is currently being challenged by many restrictions on the gathering of young people to discuss issues related to citizenship or having inclusive, pluralistic societies. And yet, the young people were determined to have the workshop. The experience and exchange, as they shared, made them more determined to pursue and work for the vision and goal of this project.

As for the success stories, the first one takes place in Palestine. The workshop gathered a diverse group of young women and men from different localities including cities, villages, and refugee camps. The group was a mix of Muslim and Christian participants, who engaged during the two days in open discussions about issues related to inclusiveness, pluralism, and citizenship. When asked to evaluate the program and the proceedings, a young woman from the Duheisha Refugee Camp, which is close to Bethlehem, expressed her deepest appreciation in participating in this forum. She said that she has been part of many previous programs and workshops, but has never experienced the openness and respect for different viewpoints and the diversity of opinions like she did in this workshop. It exemplified the ideal society that she would like to be part of, belong to, and build. This is why she has become enthusiastic about the initiatives that were developed through this workshop and is currently active in developing them further.

The second success story is in Lebanon. An emotional conclusion characterized the workshop finale as live testimony was given by the grandson of Ghassan Hasrouti, who was killed in the Beirut explosion on August 5, during which he spoke about the pain but also the hope he and his family experienced through this tragedy. The setting of the workshop was extraordinary, as the meeting space was selected intentionally to take place at one of the tallest buildings in Beirut that overlooked the area where the massive August explosion happened. The view was a motivation and hope for the participants as they confront the tragedy that has befallen Lebanon.

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.

Several short and long-term results emerged through the implementation of this project, some of which are as follows:

- A total of 86 young participants acquired new skills on how to design and develop community initiatives and how to carry out voluntary work.
- Each participant has a developed understanding, awareness, and knowledge of citizenship, pluralism, inclusiveness, volunteerism, cyber activism, crisis management, the role of the arts in civic engagement, and other vital issues related to gender equality, human dignity, justice, and freedom.
- At least four community initiatives emerged in Palestine, which revolved around key issues such as distance learning, growth of local industries, recycling, and safeguarding the environment. Several other initiatives are in the works that are being developed in the other project countries.

- Several young students were part of the activities from the project's former phases. These students took leadership roles in the 2020 workshops to facilitate and train the participants on different topics.
- It is envisioned that the young people, especially Christian Arab students and young professionals, will engage more proactively in their communities as active citizens.
- Youth Chapters led by and comprised of young people in the different project countries have been established. This empowers the next generation of leaders as a collective regional power to undertake the important issues for the future of the Middle East.

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 were multiple practices employed in 2020 to ensure meeting the project's goals. Among these practices are the following:

- Forming the youth chapters in the different project countries to ensure continuity, representation, engagement, and participation in the different operations of the project. Assuming full responsibility, the participation of the former participants who exhibited commitment and active engagement and establishing a regional steering committee, was key to the success of implementing the workshops. It also demonstrated the project leadership's commitment to sharing the space of decision making and collective leadership.
- A second practice was the intensive use of digital applications as the COVID-19 pandemic made it almost impossible for face-to-face and in-person interactions. Holding the pre- and post-implementation operations of the workshops online made it possible to plan, organize, maintain synergy, and assess together as one body.
- The Diyar Consortium devised criteria to advance best initiatives that will be nominated next year for the research and innovation award and will attend the regional conference (proposed to take place during summer 2021). The participants will advance the different initiatives from each region following a set of criteria and the Diyar Consortium will form a regional committee that will choose the best of these initiatives to be awarded and recognized.
- While the tools and topics selected for the workshops in the project countries were slightly different from each other, there was a common framework under which they were implemented, focusing on the key issues of citizenship, pluralism, gender equality, inclusiveness, and volunteerism. This allowed for the diversity of opinions and contextual application, but also to work within a shared regional perspective and vision.

Quantitative Results

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

PEOPLE Served <i>Avoid Duplicate Counts between Categories</i>	# of People Served	Comments or Description
Women <i>age 18+</i>	47	<i>These young women whose ages ranged from 19-35 were participants in the four workshops held in Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. Among them there were three women with disabilities. More than half of the women were employed or recent graduates still searching for work while the rest were university students.</i>
Men <i>age 18+</i>	39	<i>These young men whose ages ranged from 19-35 were participants in the four workshops held in Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. Among them there were four young men with disabilities. More than 65% of the men were employed or recent graduates still searching for work while the rest were university students.</i>
Youth <i>age 13-18</i>		
Children <i>age 0-13</i>		
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
<i>Leadership and Capacity Building Workshops</i>	4	86	<i>The workshops were held in the four project countries: Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. The topics of focus were mainly citizenship, pluralism, gender equality, inclusiveness, community initiatives, and volunteerism.</i>

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.

Please see the attached financial report.

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

The only variance is that several trainers were very impressed with the young participants that they declined to take their honorariums and instead asked that these amounts be contributed to this important program.

SIGNATURES AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION:

Project Director: Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb

Signature:



Name: Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb

