



FDCD NEWS 2011

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES

Beirut, January 2012

Editorial



Dr. Riad Jarjour,
President of FDCD

The year 2011 was a special and unique one in the Arab World, it was the year of revolutions! What we witnessed was a wave of popular protest that led to regime changes in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen. One of the important features of those Arab revolutionary popular uprisings is the remarkable bold youth presence that invaded the streets calling for a regime change. Related to it, the rise of electronic communication means. FDCD accompanied that movement and was in touch with its youth network and friends.

It was a special year for FDCD as well; an FDCD spring! It was the year that FDCD started implementing its strategic plan for the years 2011-2013, with focus on two major Programs: Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution and the second on Citizenship and the Empowerment of Women. It was a year of transition from a “project” to a “program” approach, and indeed this was a successful action.

The fruitful activities brought together more than 800 persons in various workshops, events, encounters and field visits. FDCD reached out to about 4500 persons in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East.

2011 witnessed a new extended network, including new partners. For example in Iraq a partnership agreement was signed with the University of Duhok, in Egypt the Ibrahim Media Centre and in Syria with

Muwatanyya Association in Aleppo. All added to enrich FDCD's outreach in the Arab World. The same is true for Lebanon, where the Christian and Muslim seminarians came together in a project concerned with action towards a culture of peacebuilding within this complex context - as a response to the specific situation in Lebanon.

I am indebted to the partners who believe in FDCD's mission/ ministry and capacity for their contribution and accompaniment to our staff and active participants in FDCD activities. To FDCD staff and volunteers who have achieved new strategic goals for 2011 with a great commitment to work for a better Middle East, for Lebanon and the region in matters that touch all its people in what leads to Democracy, Justice, Peace, Reconciliation and Active Citizenship.

Latest News FDCD

- FDCD WEBSITE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY UPDATED AND REDESIGNED
- STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2013 LAUNCHED
- NEW PROJECTS WERE STARTED IN 2011, EXPANDING FDCD'S OUTREACH EVEN MORE

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ACTIVITIES

Emotional Freedom Technique - Level 1



The workshop, "Using Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) for Healing: Training Dialogue Practitioners in Lebanon on TRAUMA", was held on January 28-30, 2011 at the Commodore Hotel in Beirut.

The presenter was Carolyn Yoder, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) from the United States with Level 2

certifications in EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing).

The workshop was part of the ongoing program to equip dialogue practitioners with trauma healing skills by the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue (FDCD). It was sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Twenty one people attended the workshop. They included PhD level psychologists/

psychotherapists who hold university positions, are in private practice and work in schools, MA level school psychologists or caseworkers for various organizations and bachelor's level students studying psychology. All participants were well trained academically at their respective levels and were well suited for the workshop.

This was the first of two workshops about Emotional Freedom Technique. The second part will take place in early 2012.

"THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT ENHANCED FDCD ON TWO LEVELS: STRONG INTERNAL LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC PROGRAM MANAGEMENT"

Organizational Assessment

The long term collaboration between (D&P) Development and Peace and FDCD went a step further into the development of its executive leadership and management capacity. This professional assistance was possible because of support from D&P. The Organizational Assessment was led and executed by Dale Hildebrand, a consultant from Canada in March 2010. The latest development enhanced FDCD

on 2 levels: the capacity to lead a program based approach, and to apply strategic management approaches and knowledge. Dale's Valuable recommendations and expertise helped FDCD program coordinators bring together the various projects and activities to align with the strategic plan 2011-2013. The new plan promotes innovation and institutional change; Peacebuilding dialogue and training will be

emphasized as tools for FDCD methodological approach, enhancing FDCD's effectiveness. Visibility is enhanced through the new website. A special thanks goes to Sonia Lebesgue who has been accompanying the Iraqi project for the last 4 years and who has been instrumental in reshaping FDCD to remain an active, well-respected and viable organization in the region.

Reinforcing women's role in Muslim-Christian dialogue



Under the patronage of the Minister of Culture Gabi Layyoun and with the sponsorship of the Norwegian embassy in Lebanon, the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue inaugurated the workshop entitled "Reinforcing women's role in the Muslim-Christian dialogue" that was held in Garden Hotel-Broumana

between the 10th and the 13th of November and was attended by 46 Arab activists in the field, mainly from Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, KSA, Bahrain and Lebanon. The official inauguration was in Monroe Hotel-Beirut with the participation of religious, political and social personalities.

ACTIVITIES

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FDCD Board Meeting

The Staff and Executive Board of FDCD met at Golden Tulip Hotel in Hamra on 04 March 2011. During this meeting, the new strategic plan for the three years of 2011-2013 was presented to the board members by FDCD staff for their input and final approval. It was an opportunity for the members of the board to meet new

staff and to be updated on the activities that had taken place and new projects that were in planning. Previously to the meeting, the FDCD yearly budget had been approved by the Board. The meeting was a full success and set the foundations for a fruitful year of active work within FDCD.



Women's Peacemakers Program in Cyprus

In September 2010, I attended a consultation for WPP - Women's Peacemakers Program - organized by the International Fellowship for Reconciliation, on the topic of "Interfaith Peace Building Consultation: The Need for a Gender Perspective." The consultation hosted women from all across the world

to discuss the potential links between gender, religion, and peace-building. Each day beginning with a unique meditation by one of the participants, and ending with workshops by participants. I gave a workshop on inter-faith dialogue and FDCD's annual International Summer Camp.

Throughout presentations, group discussions on very heated and personal topics, and group reflections, the women created bonds that have gone beyond the workshop and is evidenced in my very inbox through motivated emails till today.

"THE WOMEN
CREATED
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WORKSHOP"

Development and Peace Youth Visit

FDCD's Canadian partner Development and Peace has arranged a visit for 10 of their youth to Lebanon, to learn and experience what the Lebanese youth live, especially after the war. They spent one whole day with the youth members of FDCD at Bikfayya, watched a video about Peace Journalism that FDCD has published, and were then divided into groups to

discuss peace and its approaches. The youth of D&P had many questions, where FDCD made sure to answer while welcoming to those youth to the office in Badaro. A trip to the South provided a wide door for many answers and thoughts those youth had about war and its effects. And for the first time, they entered a mosque at Downtown Beirut and learned a lot about the

Islamic religion and dialogue between Muslims and Christians in the Arab world, especially from the experience of FDCD and its projects.



ACTIVITIES

Promotion for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue



The Forum for Development Culture and Dialogue undertook the responsibility of implementing the project entitled: "Promotion for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue" as one intervention under the Human rights and Citizenship program leading towards best achievement to the final goal while respecting the mission and

vision of FDCD. This project was sponsored by FAP (Fondation pour l'Aide au Protestantisme)

The project was a collaboration between Church, Muslim related organizations and other Non Governmental organizations with FDCD participants; it gathered 36 participants from 8 Arab countries for 5 days (22-26 June 2010) to exchange, share, learn, apply and resume sustainable work to

go on until the goal is achieved.

The general goal of this workshop was to support communication practices advancing inter-faith understanding through representing religious and cultural differences in a fair, balanced way, and to work towards enabling people of different denominations and confessions to act together for the purpose of building peaceful communal relations.

"CULTURAL EVENINGS, TRIPS AND SILENT CALM EVENINGS HELPED THE YOUTH KNOW BETTER ABOUT WHAT IS NEEDED TO ACCEPT THE OTHER"

International Work and Study Camp 2011



FDCD has organized the yearly youth camp for 2011 under the title of "Dialogue: Its Role in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution". Such a gathering for 35 participants (males and females) from 9 different Arab and European countries enriches dialogue among youth and urges the importance of implementing peace and resolving different kinds of conflicts via group discussions and the walk and talk that were supervised by two expert trainers Agnete Holm from Denmark and Bart Brandsma from Holland.

Youth admitted their fear from the unknown and the other when they first came

to the camp at Dhour Chweir, Lebanon 3-10 July 2011. Yet, the sessions given by the trainers and visitors, as well as the church and mosque visit that they shared, made clear to the participants who is that "other" with all of his/her background, culture and religious difference, and came to an end that emphasizes the unity in diversity.

Cultural evenings opened more space for sharing, trips allowed more windows for interactions and the silent calm evenings helped those youth know better about all what is needed to accept the other.

Linda Macktaby, the Youth Program Coordinator at FDCD, took the youth notes, desires and requests to work along with their needs for the coming IWSC 2012 with new participants and again from around the world!



ACTIVITIES

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Music in Dialogue

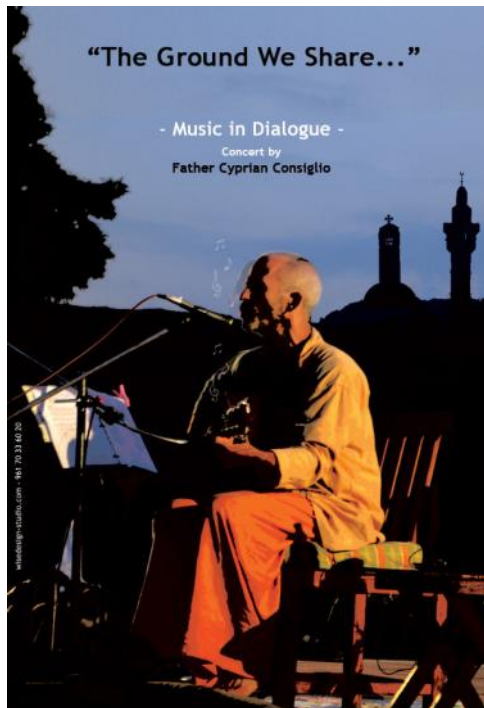
The Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue, along with Adyan and Danmission, has arranged very successful "Music in Dialogue" concerts in Lebanon and Syria, under the title of "The Ground We Share". Father Cypryan Consiglio from the USA came to Lebanon and then to Syria to perform his music and words, combining religions positively to spread the message of peace and love among different religions.

Concerts were held at Near East School of Theology, Circle of Dialogue and Development and the National Evangelical Church of Minyara, where people came from different regions to sing with Father Cypryan the songs that combine Christian and Muslim beliefs in one sense and soul.

The audience were deeply taken by the songs, especially the one whose refrain Father Cypryan sang in Arabic ("In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful", the first verse of many suras of the Qur'an and used as an opening to many important documents and speeches

in an Islamic context). This song took the hearts of all the audience who could simply see Christianity and Islam in Dialogue.

The message of Music in Dialogue did not stop in Lebanon. After spending one week giving lectures at Haigazian University, giving a chapel at the



Near East School of Theology, besides the concerts, the next stop was Syria.

Father Cypryan traveled there accompanied by two members from Danmission: Agnete Holm and Jonas Jorgensen as well as Linda Macktaby from FDCD- Lebanon, along with two friends from America, to perform two concerts: one in

Damascus at the Danish Institute and one in Aleppo at the Syrian Orthodox Church. The audience there commented that this message of the "Ground We Share" should never stop, and that people need to rethink dialogue through music. Positively, the audience in Syria

clapped, sang and prayed, both religions (Islam and Christians), with one spirit of love and sharing.

FDCD helped in the logistics required for the concerts, taking care of transportation and any arrangements that were required. The feedback of these concerts and this major event was mainly positive. One negative thing FDCD has heard was that, why didn't we arrange to do it

in more places in Lebanon and Syria and why didn't we spread it out to other countries? This is a question for us to reconsider for later events on the same level.

"HIS MUSIC AND WORDS COMBINED RELIGIONS POSITIVELY TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF PEACE AND LOVE AMONG DIFFERENT RELIGIONS"



“PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED NOT ONLY RECEIVED THEORETICAL INPUT BUT ALSO EXPERIENCED DIFFERENT WAYS OF LIVING IN THEIR COUNTRY”



Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Program in Lebanon

The year 2011 saw the birth of a newly shaped Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Program, in many ways and forms. We started the year with a new program coordinator, Maher Btaiche, who is actively supported in the conceptualization, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of the program at large and the projects themselves by Mona Ahmed, the Program Advisor seconded to FDCD by our German partner GIZ.

With a new team on board, the shape of the projects changed as well. Three projects were implemented this year, all with numerous activities. Two of these projects were implemented in Lebanon and were started in 2011, while the third is a continuation of a previous engagement in Northern Iraq. (see Article overleaf)

One of these newly conceived projects goes by the title of “Young Civil Society Leaders”, which aims to bring together young leaders of civil society, provide them with training in alternative methods of resolving conflicts, both on a micro and on a macro level. It

brought together scout representatives aged 16-24 affiliated with vastly different scout groups, and based at various sites around the country.

The four camps took place in Kfardebian, Zefta and Tripoli. These locations were chosen for being predominantly of different confessions, giving participants the opportunity to not only receive theoretical input but also to experience different ways of living which coexist with their very own country.

The feedback was incredibly encouraging; many participants thanked FDCD for providing them with this eye- and heart-opening opportunity, which they would otherwise not have been able to ever benefit from. Having spent four long weekends together over the course of the year, the group of very motivated youngsters is now determined to reshape the future of Lebanon’s scout landscape into a more integrative and mutually interested one.

The project is due to continue in its second phase in 2012, which will involve a few of the participants from the first

year as graduates and messengers for the lessons, hopes and aspirations that arose in 2011.

The second new project implemented in Lebanon has a different target group. Interestingly, it has yielded in many respects a similar message. In this project, FDCD’s Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Program is working with students of Islamic studies and Christian theology, to facilitate a meeting of minds concerning their common understanding of humanity despite their vastly different backgrounds.

The first two weekend encounters took place in 2011 among a very vibrant group of participants who are eager to take matters into their own hands and move forward with the ideas generated in the discussions – both within sessions and during break times. The project entitled “Towards Peacebuilding in a Lebanese Context” is far from over; and yet it is off to a very promising start – not only for FDCD but also for the participating scout groups and the country at large.

ACTIVITIES

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Peacebuilding by active citizenship and advocacy (in Iraq)

This project was launched as a continuation of FDCD's previous presence in the north of Iraq. It consists of encouraging young Iraqi university students to get involved in civil society action to promote for peacebuilding and active citizenship at different universities. The need for this project was identified through personal interviews with Iraqis, which highlighted the fact that being a young democracy, civil society in



Iraq is still quite weak and knowledge of how NGOs work is still rather limited. The project arose as a direct response to this need.

The project is being implemented in cooperation with the University of Duhok, where the first activity was held in Summer 2011. It involved representatives of NGOs as well as university students and was a big success. For

the second phase of the project, participants implemented their own projects, with the support of FDCD. Three projects were implemented: one in Duhok, one in Kirkuk and one in Baghdad. Apart from the training content itself, the project yielded a strong partnership with Duhok University and there are plans for future cooperation between the institution and FDCD.

“THIS PROJECT AROSE AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED THROUGH PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH IRAQIS”



Leaders for Interreligious Understanding

Eight leaders each from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Denmark were chosen by FDCD, ADYAN, CEOSS and Danmission to come together under the title of Leaders for Interreligious Understanding, (LIU) being divided into three workshops one in each of Egypt, Denmark and Lebanon, besides the e-course learning where the participants dialogue and interact.

The first part of the e-learning course was done under the title of Religious Freedom and Freedom of Conscience, and after it the

participants met in Egypt for the first workshop, where they listened to many speakers, and had their own chance to represent their points of views, ending up with each group from each country having their own leaders for their community.

The workshop in Egypt was organized by CEOSS, and



held on 18-22 November 2011. After they came back, the Lebanese participants started meeting to apply their own project, as a result of the first encounter which includes trainings and exchange visits for youth. More details about their project will be mentioned in the coming newsletter.

The second e-learning course will start in February, and the second workshop will take place in Denmark in early March 2012.



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Youth Committee Meeting

The Youth Committee of the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue met at Broumana Garden Hotel on 26- 27 March 2011, with new members to join, and discussed the mission, vision and projects of FDCD. The youth were then divided into three groups to come up with three projects, one about development, another about culture and a third one about dialogue. The mission for these project and



Youth Committee Members:

- Elian Macktaby
- Maya Jizzini
- Mohammad Mehdy
- Mohammad Zaydan
- Naji Abou Lmouna
- Nayla Hajjar
- Rafi Salameh
- Robert Jmayyel
- Vanessa Bassil
- Zeinab Hussein

for the year ahead was divided among all, and commitments to attend the meetings and to keep the mission of the youth committee on track were taken by the youth committee to have a fruitful year and a promising action on peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

As well as Samiha Chaaban as consultant to FDCD and Linda Macktaby as the Coordinator of the Youth Program at FDCD.

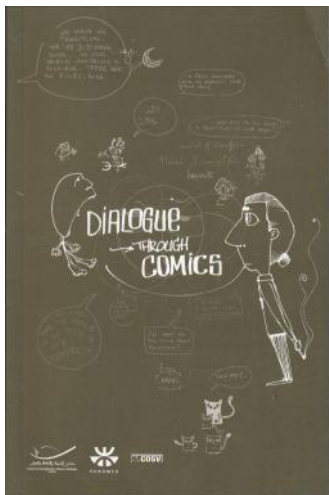


New Publications 2011

The following publications came out at FDCD in 2011:

Dialogue through Comics [book]

the printed documentation of a comic drawing workshop with Lebanese and Danish young artists



Peace Journalism [DVD]

this DVD exists in two versions: Arabic language and English language



العيش المشترك [book]

this book is a compilation of speeches and lectures from an FDCD workshop about common living. Arabic lan-



EXPERIENCES

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Uganda Experience

by Linda Macktaby

Uganda is a place that has faced and is still facing conflicts in its various countries. They have had their own struggles, that they have passed many in a very positive way. An exchange visit was organized by the Mennonite Central Community 4-14 Nov 2010. I had the chance to be in this special experience to learn and to interact with those who have decided to overcome struggles and conflict too and build for peace in their humble way. We were five from Lebanon, accompanied by Sarah Adams from the MCC, went into bushes, heard and talked about stories of struggles that the Ugandans had passed through. I was so impressed, when meeting the different communities there, to see their smile and their passion to live in peace, with all of their poverty. They received

us with warm traditional dances, and could easily drag us with them into these, to share with them their victory over the pain they have passed through.



I have learned from them a lot! Looking into the children's eyes, seeing their smiles while studying under the tree, memorizing songs of welcoming and tradition; each story they shared, with smiles and sometimes tears, ended with a lesson learned by all, how evil cannot win over the good. Each day, when we, the Lebanese were talking about what we have seen, lived and shared, while being in Uganda, we were realizing how significant it is to exchange with others their thoughts about overcoming conflicts,

because sometimes simple stories could be of a great lesson.

One story I have heard that impressed me a lot, about two tribes who were in conflict, and anything could be a reason for them to start killing each other. They have decided after a long period of fights, to solve their problems, so their leaders thought that the best way is to mingle. Now which tribe would move and leave its territory to mingle with the other?

After discussions, they decided that they both should leave their lands, and meet in the middle road! I met these two tribes who became one eventually. Their pastor, a young fellow, spoke their story to us! Finding common solutions is not easy, but could be very simple when we decide that we really want to solve our conflict. This was one of my best lessons that I have experienced while staying those ten days in Uganda. Experience that I am grateful for to both FDCD and MCC.

“I HAD THE CHANCE TO [...] LEARN AND TO INTERACT WITH THOSE WHO HAVE DECIDED TO OVERCOME STRUGGLES AND CONFLICT TOO AND BUILD FOR PEACE IN THEIR HUMBLE WAY“



A Trip to Al-Kwakh

by Sara Sibai



“THIS CULTURE
IS WHO WE
ARE AND WHAT
WE WANT TO
SPREAD “

FDCD’s Youth Committee began its journey with workshops and meetings that transformed a diverse group of youth from different parts of Lebanon into a team that grew through respect, dialogue and appreciation of the other.

As the team formed, they wanted to reach outwards, to touch communities with their passion for a growing culture of peace, spirituality, and understanding. They decided to go far away, leave their comfort zones and visit an area they know little about in the northern Beqaa of Lebanon, near Hermel: Al-Kwakh.

On the afternoon of Saturday April 10th, 2010, the youth committee got on a van and began the long trip to Al-Kwakh, where they were to eat local food, the local way, spend the night in stone huts, and meet the locals.

The following morning, the youth committee members climbed on the back of a truck and were led to the fields of beans to help pick them. They were rewarded by being given the barrels of beans they picked. They decided to distribute a portion of them to those they meet throughout their journey, and to take the rest home. Working in the field created a relationship, long lost in our city-lives, with the land and nature. In later reflection, the team members ticked their goal of immersing into a new culture and meeting people that may otherwise have seemed too different to connect with. It was a

first and necessary step of diving into a culture, overcoming a sense of cultural shock and breaking the cultural barriers built in our minds.

Also, as a group, the evening sessions spent talking and sharing thoughts and experiences helped them get to know each other on a far more profound level - talking with such honesty and simplicity about



themselves, which is a culture in and of itself - “this culture is who we are and what we want to spread, as opposed to any one bringing in a culture, rather one we have created unwillingly and unawares.” Sometimes change can begin just by being that change, walking the change, acting the change, and letting it become the norm.

THE LAST WORD

FDCD News 2011

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Word of Thanks

FDCD was able to carry out the activities described in this report thanks to the generous support from our partners.

For this we would like to express our sincere thanks to the following for their valuable financial and personal contribution to our work in 2011:

Danmission Denmark
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Germany
Development and Peace Canada
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Mennonite Central Committee USA
Presbyterian Church (USA)
The Royal Norwegian Embassy Beirut
United Church of Christ and the Disciples USA
 ...and others

Also, FDCD would like to thank the **Board** for their accompaniment and support throughout the year.

don't forget to visit our new website at
www.fdc.org

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Special mention goes out to Mrs. **Iman Mourad** who spent one year working with FDCD as Administrative Director. Her close collaboration with the staff resulted in the production of an FDCD Employee Manual and we'd like to express our gratitude for her contribution towards the internal strengthening and development of FDCD.