



Annual activity Report of 2008 and plans for 2009

Dear CB members, friends and supporters. It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I submit the following update on CB experiences and activities in this year as well as plans for 2009. I would like to thank each and every one of you for the vital support and understanding that has enabled CB to contribute to dialogue across borders where it is needed most.

Here are the core activities of CB this year so far and the plans for 2009.

Crossing Borders Media Skills Development for Dialogue 2008-2009

The project purpose is to provide culture, conflict and gender sensitive media skills for dialogue for 36 young journalists from the Middle East, Denmark and North Africa. The project has received 1 million kr from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the DEMENA Fund through MS.

After the project proposal was approved in late February, a planning meeting was held on 30 April – 3 May 2008 in Amman, Jordan. The aim of the meeting was to enable the coordinators, CB magazine editor and project manager to discuss the overall aim, activities and structure of the project in general and to make detailed plans for the upcoming media training course in Denmark. The participants of the planning meeting were the Danish project manager, the Danish editor of the magazine, the Egyptian project partner, plus the Egyptian Palestinian and Jordanian project partner. Citing security reasons, the Israel coordinator cancelled her participation one day before the meeting.

As their return flight was from Tel Aviv, the Danish project manager and editor crossed over to Jerusalem via Alenby to meet the Israeli coordinator before flying back home.

Media skills training course

Crossing Borders Media Skills for Dialogue Course was implemented on 3-14 August 2008 at Vallekilde Højskole, Denmark. The aim of the course was to provide a group of young journalists from Denmark and the Middle East with a unique dialogue space and skills training in culture, conflict and gender sensitive media.

During the 12-day course, the participants attended lectures and workshops

led by subject expert while they lived under the same roof, studied in groups and pairs, participate in simulation games, and cooperated in preparing the new magazine. The intensive training at Vallekilde was spiced up with a public event (see below) and media internship day in Copenhagen. During the media day, the participants were divided into small mixed groups and sent off to spend the day at Politiken, Nyhedsavis, 24 Timer, International Media support, DR Byen and Blaagaards Plads.

The course was an excellent setting for intense intercultural dialogue, exchange and mutual exploration among the participants and trainers. Media speakers and trainers included Danmark Radio journalist Jens Nauntofte, International Media Supporter Communication Director, Lotte Dahlmann, Crossing Borders Director Garba Diallo, Communication Director of Serious Games Mikkel Lukas Overby, and Jasper Vilgaard of the Danish Defense Forces' Media Center.

The course also gave the young journalists the opportunity to experience the Danish Folkehøjskole, visit media institutions and network with fellow Danish journalists. Moreover, the participants had the chance to interact with the Vallekilde media summer course students.

Making the Media Work for Dialogue

Among the highlights of the course was the public event at the Copenhagen University on August 7, where the participants had the chance to encounter the Danish public and interact with media experts from Denmark, the UK and Yemen.

The panel speakers comprised Media-specialist Dr. Nouredine Miladi of the Arab Muslim Media Research in London, The Executive Director of International Media Support Jesper Højbjerg, Politiken's Chief Editor Tøger Seidenfaden and Professor Raufa Hassan, Yemeni Media expert and chairperson of the Cultural Development Foundation, Sana'a University, Yemen. The event was attended by ca. 150 mainly university students and representatives from the civil society community in Denmark.

Monitoring visit

On 13-17 October, Garba Diallo and our Jordanian partner, Khaled Shorman paid a monitoring visit to Forum for Human Rights Dialogue, our partner in Egypt. The visit was part of the core activities of media skills for dialogue project. The aim was to see how the young CB journalists and partner organisations were implementing and benefiting from the project and also to share with them information on all the aspects of the project, including their experience in Denmark, the reaction they experienced after Denmark, the upcoming follow up workshop in Aqaba and the distribution of the magazines in Egypt. During the visit, meetings were held with journalists and their institutions.

The publication and distribution of the CB magazine

As part of the media project, four editions were planned to be published. Two editions have been published. The theme of the first edition was freedom of speech. As such, the participants had the space to express their feelings and to reflect on meeting fellow young journalists from other countries for the first time.

The theme of the second edition was post encounter experience. Hence the journalists were assigned to write articles about the feedback about the reactions from within themselves and their social surroundings after the encounter in Denmark.

New contacts in Yemen have made it possible to expand the target group and distribution outreach of the magazine. Through the Yemen Times, the Yemen Women Media Forum and the Yemen Cultural Development Foundation it has been possible to have participants from Yemen and distribute the magazine there.

Aqaba follow up workshop 6-9 November

As planned a four day follow up workshop was held in Aqaba for the same young journalists from the Media course in Denmark. The follow up workshop was a good occasion to reunite, share experiences, give feedback on the project and magazines, receive further media skills training and write articles for the upcoming magazine and make plans of action for the next steps of the project. The two core training sessions focused on Conflict sensitive media experiences and challenges seen from Jordanian journalist perspectives with Jawad Al-Omari, A TV, and Freedom of expression in globalised world with Martin Selsoe, Turkey and Middle East Correspondent

CB Youth coordinators Capacity Building Course 25 June – 5 July, Fredensborg Youth Hostel

Held at the Danhostel in Fredensborg from 25 June through 5 July 2008, the course focused on building the capacity of 29 youth coordinators and group leaders from Israel, Palestine, Germany and Denmark.

The theme of the training comprised awareness raising, intercultural communication and dialogue, sharing experiences on youth participation, European dimension, project development and coordination and networking skills.

Centred around youth participation, the programme comprised lectures, workshops, internship at Danish NGOs, excursions to Copenhagen, group project and cultural nights. The method comprised keynote lectures,

workshops, group projects, exposure to Danish NGOs and intercultural exchange.

One of the keynote lectures addressed the "60 Year ME Conflict": Lessons and Perspectives, Experience from the Danish Youth Council , the Roots of International conflict, tools for interpersonal conflict management, the European dimension, youth participation, project development, youth in human rights activism , journalism skills and techniques, youth mobilization, networking and exchange.

The programme also included half day Internship day in mixed groups at 7 Danish NGOs, special workshop on Futurist Scenario at the Danish institute for Future Research in Copenhagen. Finally the implemented activities included excursion and boat tour of Copenhagen and two cultural nights. The course concluded with evaluation and plan of action.

Crossing Borders Up to You: Women Correcting Media Images

Partnership Building Visit to Egypt and Yemen on 6-15 June 2008 by CB Director Garba Diallo and Project coordinator Anna Rebecca Kledal.

The purpose of the partnership building visit to Egypt and Yemen was to

- Further develop partnership with the Egyptian organisation Moltaka (Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue)
- Make contacts and explore partnership cooperation with other civil society organisations and media outlets in Egypt
- Meet and consult with Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute in Cairo
- Meet with Ms. Nadia Sakkaf, Editor in Chief of the Yemen Times
- Meet and consult with the programme officers on gender and media of the Anna Lindh Foundation's Dialogue 1001 Actions 2008

The activities of the mission comprised meeting, exchange and collaboration exploration with the project partner Moltaka and potential partner organisations which Moltaka had identified and arranged meetings with. The working programme of the visit started with a meeting with Mr.Said Darwish, Moltaka's Director of the Board of Trustees and Mr. Fathi Abou Hatab. The meeting took place just after our arrival and check in at the Om Kothoom hotel on 6 June 2008 in Zamalek. The participants went through the visit programme in details and agreed on

- presenting the project idea to the organisations we were going to meet
- getting feedback and suggestions from them
- exploring collaboration possibilities with those organisations

The meeting continued into a working dinner at Abou Sid restaurant in Zamalek. After dinner day one was concluded.

Day 2 started with a meeting in Tahrir with Ambassador Mokhless Kotb Secretary General of the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights. The Ambassador has a long experience and clear ideas regarding the causes of violation of women's rights and vision how to alleviate the problem and the important role of the media in the process. The ambassador cited tradition, underdevelopment, lack of education and the land tenure system as the key factors through which women are discriminated against. In order to tackle the problem, awareness raising, legal and land reforms are necessary. As more than 90% of Egyptian families have TV, the mass media can play a key role in the work toward gender equality.

- These meetings will be crucial, especially in connection with 7-day follow up seminar in Cairo and the publication of the booklet in Egypt. In addition to meeting with and visiting the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute in Cairo and the Anna Lindh Foundation in Alexandria and Moltaka.

Based on the result of the partnership mission, a revised project proposal was sent to Kvinno in September. According to their timetable, Crossing Borders should receive by the end of year. If approved, the project will include 2-one week training courses in Cairo and Sana'a plus a training of trainers visit to Denmark. The project outcome will include a handbook on media strategy detecting and correcting media images booklet for NGOs.

Global Citizens in Action Project Seminar in Amman Jordan, 19-24 October, 2008.

CB was represented in the seminar by Board member Britha Mikkelsen together with four youth from Denmark. Below is the report by Britha Mikkelsen

On October 19 the first phase of the project was initiated by the host organisation, Jordan River Foundation, Youth Initiatives Unit. It consisted of 5-days exchanges of experience on youth work and planning for the GCAP project phase 2. The participants were 4 youth and a youth leader from each four organisations: Jordan River Foundation (JRF), Promising Hands Jordan (substituted for Bulgarian organisation which did not come), Palestinian Vision and Crossing Borders Denmark (see attached programme and list of participants). JRF provided the seminar facilitators and the coordinator Laila Juma. Participating youth - all volunteers - ranged between 16 and 26 years. The seminar took place at the Queen Rania Family and Child Centre and was sponsored by Euromed. Participants stayed at the Youth Hostel in Sports City.

The Danish participants were Dilay Fener, Zeynet Unver, Lasse Volfing, Nanna Sejsbo and youth leader Britha Mikkelsen.

The seminar had three sets of activities. These activities were: (1) exchanges on personal and organisation's experience with youth work, - including energizers, games, songs (2) excursions to other NGOs - JOHUD & Karmah

Youth Centre -, to historical places - Roman theatre and Petra, and to top restaurants such as Kan Zaman, Jaffra and a famous restaurant in Madaba, (3) Preparation of draft framework for GCAP phase 2 activities. A cultural night concluded the seminar.

It featured displays from the three country groups, entertainment by dancing boys from QRFCC, another delicious dinner for the participants and the prominent guests from JRF's networks. Highlights were a video shot by Sarah from the sessions, travels and trips, of improvised dancing in the minibus that took the group around during the week etc. And secondly Zeynep's love-song in Arabic (learnt on the spot!) and accompanied by Rana from QRFCC on guitar.

During the seminar two representatives from Euromed visited the Centre to monitor the programme and interview management. Shorter interviews took place between the Euromed visitors and the two Youth Leaders from Palestine and Denmark.

The JRF/YIU Manager and the participating youth took a great interest in Nanna's account of Operation Day Work. The idea of OD that youth themselves contribute with their work and education towards less privileged youth's opportunities had a strong appeal. In particular the idea that this might provide a link between JRF and the private sector appealed to JRF management. JRF is likely to pursue the idea of introducing Operation Day Work in Jordan in an adjusted form perhaps, and an interest in receiving advice and assistance from Denmark was expressed.

Thorough preparation of the seminar by JRF and committed, professional and lively Jordanian JRF facilitators provided a great atmosphere for exchange and learning between the 16 enthusiastic youth. The individual country groups were well prepared to exchange experience on a number of different youth work activities. (See attached programme from the CB/Danish group).

In retrospect, a few significant points for phase 2 stand out:

- The subject matter - youth/citizens' rights, vulnerable youth, violence, conflict, etc - and the opportunities in each organisation and country is the focus of the GCAP, but time for discussions between the participants on these issues was somewhat limited. The brunt of the seminar was used for sharing experience on youth work and approaches and energizing the environment in the youthful group. There is interesting work outstanding in reaching common ground of understanding for phase 2 of the GCAP.
- To what degree the phase 2 GCAP project will be nationally specific or share topic and approach could not be discussed in any detail. Neither the idea of getting more organisations involved in the CGAP.
- There was considerable interest in Operation Day Work but little time to discuss this as a possible element in GCAP phase 2 or as a separate activity.
- Recognition that the participating organisations have different mandates. Crossing Borders does not have a particular youth mandate in DK, but may bridge and network with other relevant organisations in DK, e.g. Red Cross/Youth, Operation Day work, and other relevant organisations.

Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the participating organisations in phase 2 is an issue when JRF initiates the follow up.

The Danish group is delighted to have had the opportunity to participate in the Global Citizens in Action Project Phase 1 and is prepared to work constructively towards a fruitful phase 2. We want to express our thanks and appreciation for having been part of the important, well-planned, and fun seminar at Jordan River Foundation.

Crossing Borders Peace in the Horn of Africa 17-23 November, Kampala

For the first time, Crossing Borders had small project entitled Promoting Peace in the Horn of Africa. Funded by UNESCO, the project aimed at providing dialogue space and capacity building for 22 youth leaders from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. The project activities comprised a one week training course and production of a documentary film and training handbook. The seminar has been implemented successfully. The film is in the final process of editing while the handbook is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The participants included Sudan's Ministry of Higher Education Dr. Adwok Nyaba, Professor Billow Khalid of Kenya and a high ranking government official of South Sudan Ms. Keni Nyba as well as Professor Nabudere of the Mbale Marcus Garvey Institute.

12-15 December, Lom, Bulgaria

Crossing Borders attended the "Pathways to Roma Inclusion – local practices on intercultural dialogue and understanding in education", held in Lom, Bulgaria, on the 13-15 December 2008.

The conference, which was organized by the Pakiv European Network and hosted by the Roma Lom Foundation, was attended by approximately 30 participants from Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Spain, Scotland, Romania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria.

CB volunteer Nikolaj Sahlstrøm gave a brief introduction to the work of CB, mainly focusing on the community development which is made possible by teaching conflict management, intercultural communication and media skills to the participants of the CB training courses, seminars and workshops. A special focus was put on the new CB Global Studies Program, which will start in January 2009 in Krogerup, Denmark.

Representatives of other NGOs – AMURTEL Romania, OXFAM Scotland, Union Romani Spain, and others – introduced their work, focusing on specific ROMA related projects. These projects were later discussed.

Other focus points of the conference were on intercultural communication (How may intercultural communication take place on equal terms between a) Roma-to-Roma, or b) minority and majority groups?), the role of the Roma civil

society (What is the role of the Roma civil society in furthering intercultural dialogue and understanding; what has been done, what steps should be taken?), and intercultural dialogue and desegregation (How can intercultural dialogue and understanding be effectively promoted in desegregation processes?)

Presentations were also given by Nicolae Gheorghe, Romania, on the Rromanipen initiative to construct a common, positive Roma identity within EU, and by Andr as Bilo, Hungary, on his latest studies regarding Roma identity and culture.

On the last day of the conference, the participants made on-site visits to local schools and institutions participating in the local Roma-Lom Foundation's education program.

Apart from making new contacts between the participants, a valuable outcome of this session was a look at what the different NGOs can offer each other and what they need from each other – anything from experiences and lessons learned to videos, books, and other teaching materials were offered from the participating organizations.

Furthermore, the participants also agreed to work on bringing isolated, local initiatives (like Rromanipen in Romania) to a common, European level, where all Pakiv members can take part in the dialogue.

Next year CB will continue to be part of the Pakiv European Network.

Networking

As part of its networking activities, Crossing Borders has participated in various forums both in Denmark and abroad. Among the forums CB participated in

1. Pakiv seminar in Berlin on Intercultural dialogue in April. CB was represented by Garba Diallo who contributed with keynote lecture and facilitation of dialogue sessions.
2. Euromed conference in Athens where CB Board members Louise Breum Brekke and J rn Faurschou represented CB at May meeting.
3. CB was also represented by CB member Denise Robinson at the Pakiv European Network Youth Exchange meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria in July.
4. Copenhagen Conference on International Understanding and Dialogue 21-22 October. The conference was organised by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had high level participating Minister, former heads of states and people from many Muslim and European countries. Garba Diallo represented CB at the conference.
5. International Student Festival, Trondheim, Norway. CB was represented by Garba Diallo, who was invited to train the dialogue group of the festival in facilitation and media skills.

Plans of Action for 2009

Among the preliminary plans are

1. Strategy seminar for CB board members to revisit our mission, vision, activities and strategy.
2. Up to You: Correcting Media Images of women Project for young journalists from Egypt, Denmark and Yemen
3. Building on and improving the CB Media skills for Dialogue for young journalists from Denmark, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Palestine and Yemen
4. Improved publication and outreach of the CB magazine
5. Building on and Improving the youth Coordinators programme for youth leaders from Israel, Denmark, Germany and Palestine
6. Continue capacity building courses for and cooperation with the Roma Pakiv European network
7. Adult Learning for Immigrants Integration project in partnership with the European centre intercultural initiative and studies of the Naples
8. Exploring the development of the CB Peace in the Horn of Africa Project
9. Study Tour to Jerusalem for teachers with CB member Anne Marie Jacobsen
10. The Development of the Crossing Borders Global Studies as a major International Study Programme at Krogerup Højskole.

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