# Shaping Youth Behaviours Through Interfaith Collaboration:

ADE's case of Ezbet El-Nakhel,
Miser El-Kadima and Madient El-Salam

**Shaping Youth Behaviours Through Interfaith Collaboration: ADE's Case of Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima and Madient El-Salam. Case Study Series No. 2.**

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Faith to Action Network mobilizes faith organizations' support for family health and wellbeing. As a global interfaith network of more than 110 Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Hindu and Muslim faith organisations, it focuses on issues that faith actors are grappling with, including sexual and reproductive health and family planning; gender equality and women's rights; peaceful coexistence and understanding.

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# Communities Richer in Diversity (CRID)

The four-year Communities Richer in Diversity project (CRID) aims at leveraging the influence of faith leaders and institutions to promote cultural diversity and respect for equal dignity in six African countries, namely, Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania. It was initiated by a consortium of faith-based organisations and networks, including Faith to Action Network (F2A), Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), African Council of Religious Leaders-Religion for Peace (ACRL-RfP), and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) with financial support from the European Union (EU). The project started in April 2018, and by 31 March 2021, six-country partners had reached at least 25,000 young men and women with interfaith and intercultural interventions. Such interventions enhanced the understanding, tolerance, and respect for cultural and religious diversity among the project participants and beneficiaries in the six countries. The activities can be categorised into four broad areas: edutainment and performance arts, peer education and capacity enhancement, community peacebuilding, and shaping of public discourse.

## Anglican Diocese of Egypt (ADE)

The Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa (abbreviated to ADE in this paper) is one of the four Dioceses of the Episcopal / Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. It covers Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti. Working towards peace between religions and interfaith dialogue is one of the five core elements of the Diocese's vision. In its structures, the Diocese has ministries of Youth & Women, Church Ministry Centres, and Interfaith Dialogues. As part of its mission to realise peace and interfaith dialogue, the Diocese has been implementing projects to promote peaceful coexistence in Egyptian society. It has partnered with Al Azhar al-Sherif and other Islamic leaders in Egypt in the interfaith dialogue interventions. The partners established an Interfaith Committee in 2003 that involved the Grand Imam of Al Azhar, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Egypt. The Diocese and its partners hold annual meetings that address cooperation and understanding between Christians and Muslims. Before implementing the CRID project, the ADE had other programs and activities on interfaith dialogues and peaceful coexistence. These include *Together we Develop Egypt phase I and II* which promoted interfaith dialogues; *Planting a Tree of Hope* that encouraged Christians and Muslims to participate in joint visual arts; *Music and Dance* activities which encouraged young people to express themselves through music and singing; and *Arkan Centre for Culture and Art and Gusour Cultural Centre* that promotes interfaith collaborations through performance and visual arts. Therefore, the Diocese used funding from the CRID project to advance its interventions in interfaith dialogues and peaceful coexistence in Egypt.

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ADE | The Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| CRID | Communities Richer in Diversity Project |
| EU | European Union |
| F2A Network | Faith to Action Network |
| COVID19 | Coronavirus disease 2019 |
| KII | Key Informant Interviews |
| TPB | The Theory of Planned Behaviour |
| OM | Outcome mapping |
| PO | Personal Outcomes |
| IOC | Intermediate Outcome |
| DOC | Development Outcomes |

# Abstract

Interfaith activities and dialogues with youth from different religions, cultures, gender, and levels of education can enhance peaceful coexistence in the local communities by positively influencing their behaviours. This paper highlights how the Anglican Diocese of Egypt's interfaith activities influenced behaviours of diverse youth from three urban slums in Cairo, Egypt, by demystifying their misconceptions towards each other and building group solidarity and collective identity. It illustrates how these interventions created spaces and channels of mutual understanding and common interests. It also identifies the aspects that positively shaped youth behaviours and actions. Participants in the ADE's activities were young men and women from the Muslim and Coptic faiths. Some were disabled. All represented different identities and cultures in Egypt, but they grew up in Cairo's slums and poor neighbourhoods. The youth participated in joint activities that instilled new skills, built confidence, and improved their self-identities. In turn, the transformed young men and women promoted cultural and religious tolerance, interfaith collaboration,x and peaceful coexistence in their local communities.

**Keywords**: Behaviour change – Youth transformation – Interfaith dialogue – Peaceful coexistence – Collective identity.

# Shaping Youth Behaviours Through Interfaith Collaboration:

## ADE's case of Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima and Madient El-Salam

# 1. Introduction

This paper argues that implementing interfaith activities between the youth of different religions, cultures, gender, and age contributes to peaceful coexistence. The paper asserts that increased interaction helps shape their attitudes and the intended behaviours because it increases their knowledge and understanding about the commonalities and differences between the various religious groups. Such interactions enhance their cross-religious and cross-cultural communication and instil the values of acceptance, tolerance, and respect. The paper draws these conclusions from a study on the outcomes of the *Communities Richer in Diversity* project, which the Anglican Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa (ADE) implemented in three slums, namely, Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima, and Madient El-Salam, that are in the Cairo governorate. The project targeted youth aged between 18 and 29 years old,[1] who came from different religious and cultural backgrounds.[2]

The Diocese sought to respond to issues which it had observed in the last few decades such as increased extremism, violence, and tensions in the slums that encircle Cairo and are largely the embodiment of urban poverty in Egypt.[3] Over time, the violence has ruined the relationships between members of different faith communities in some slums, including Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima, and Madient El-Salam. According to the ADE programs manager, youth in these communities, who are from different faiths, contributed to these tensions because they lacked trust and respect and were intolerant and ignorant of other religions, beliefs, and religious rituals.[4] Indeed, the problem statement in the ADE's project document argues that "religious radicalisation, intolerance, and violence has affected all sectors of Egypt's society."[5] The ADE document further states that the violence was intended to incite hatred and animosity between Muslims and Christians. Therefore, the ADE's project was a continuation of the previous interventions which aimed at building and promoting understanding, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence between followers of different religions through visual and performing arts, as well as community work.[6] Specific activities under performing arts were drum circle practices, story-telling sessions, pantomime workshops, and film screening forums, while activities under visual arts were painting, photography, Arabic calligraphy, and sculpting. Meanwhile, community work involved cleaning and lighting the streets and solidarity visits to schools and marginalised communities. However, this

paper notes that not all violence in the slums is due to religious radicalisation and violent extremism. In the circumstances of slum dwellings, a small, non-religious disagreement opportunistically takes a religious dimension and escalates into a violent conflict.[7]



*Young women enjoying drumming at the ADE's Gusour Centre in a drum circle session.*



*ADE's pantomime actors in action at the Gusour Centre Stage*

Therefore, the ADE responded to the situation in the slums through various programmes that preceded the *Communities Richer in Diversity* project. These are *Learning Together, Planting a Tree of Hope, Training Young Women to Create Handcrafts, and Music and Dance* activities. Further, the ADE established two centres: the A*rkan Centre for Culture and Art, and Gusour Cultural Centre*. In essence, the *Communities Richer in Diversity* project sought to consolidate and advance the achievements of these preceding projects. According to the ADE's reports, interventions implemented under *Communities Richer in Diversity* project reached 2,467 male and female youth from different faiths, cultures, and backgrounds from November 2018 to 30 December 2020. Additionally, the project brought together 30 young imams and 30 young priests to enhance their relationships and to participate in community development work. The imams and priests attended seminars, visited sites of religious significance, and participated in training sessions on how they could involve the youth in community development activities. Informing these ADE's interventions was the recognition that building sustainable peace needs all levels of society, especially the youth. As Bishop Mouneer Hanna Anis explained, "we trust that only the work of our hands will develop our country, especially that of our youth who are very energetic and able to perform miracles."[8]

Therefore, this paper highlights the role of ADE's interfaith activities as implemented under visual and performing arts and community development. The paper argues that these activities contributed to changing the participants' attitudes and positively shaped their behaviours. It shows how the activities demystified the negative stereotypes, which the participants held, about other religions and, thus, enhanced cooperation between young men and women youth from different faiths. The paper also adduces evidence that shows how the activities enhanced the participants' confidence and promoted harmony and peaceful co-existence between the followers of different faiths. It provides evidence and inferences that demonstrate how the ADE interventions brought youth from diverse backgrounds together and helped them understand each other, work together, gain positive attitudes, and reshape their behaviours. Such changes impacted their local communities in the form of development initiatives.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section introduces the aim of this paper and the main target group and the geographic locations of the study, while the second section presents the background that gives more information on the context of the case study. The third section presents the research methodology that applied a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the fourth section highlights the analytical approach, and the fifth section espouses the ADE's pathway for change which explained the various activities that contributed to behaviour change. The sixth section adduces the evidence of behaviour change, while the seventh section discusses the transformation of individuals and relations. The final section presents the conclusion of the study and the recommendations. Overall, the paper demonstrates that shaping youth behaviour is an important outcome of interfaith collaborations and is a critical guarantor of a sustainable culture of peaceful coexistence in the communities.

# Background

In addition to the Gusour Centre in the premises of ADE in downtown Cairo, the ADE implemented the various activities of *Communities Richer in Diversity* in three sprawling *ashwa'iyyat* or slums (informal settlements).[9] The first one is Ezbet El-Nakhel that lies between Cairo and Qalubia governorates and is occupied by 824,000 persons.[10] The second is Miser El-Kadima which is in southern Cairo and occupied by approximately 258,000 persons.[11] In this slum, there is a popular district for isolated deaf communities. From ADE's prior experience, two deaf communities (Christian and Muslim) are isolated from one another. For that reason, the project targeted this district to introduce the concept of diversity and cultural acceptance within the deaf community.[12] The third community is Madient El-Salam which is in eastern Cairo with a population of about 500,000 persons.[13]

The ADE chose the three from among the hundreds of slums which encircle Cairo.[14] As in all the other slums in Cairo, dwellers of the three slums wallow in poverty, and they lack social services and basic infrastructure such as electricity, running water, and sewage systems. The slums are not only overpopulated and characterised by limited livelihood opportunities and high unemployment, but the slum dwellers have very low literacy rates. The three *ashwa'iyyat* are prone to recurrent violent religious clashes between community members who differ in religion and culture.[14] They also host regular gatherings of people adhering to Muslim Brotherhood[15] and Salafist[16] ideologies, which means that the youth are exposed to extreme ideas that affect their perceptions towards "others", the value of peaceful coexistence, and the use of violence.

In the project sites, the youth belong to either the Muslim or the Coptic faiths. Some of these youths have embraced the more extreme/radical ideologies propounded by strands of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafists.[18] Therefore, they demand the application of Islamic law (Sharia) and the installation of Islamic rule. They base their demands on the claim that the Egyptian constitution states that Islam is the state religion. According to ADE, youth in Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima, and Madient El-Salam are the most targeted group at the risk of recruitment by extremists due to several reasons. The main reason is that these slums contain considerable numbers of Muslim Brotherhood and Salafist members who influence the youth, although this number is not exactly defined or specified. Given the depravity of the slums, lack of job opportunities, and low literacy levels, these organisations attract the youth because they implement community welfare programmes. Such attraction is aided by the huge youth bulge in the country. According to the Egyptian human population age categories (2017), one in four Egyptians is between 15 and 24 years, and 61% of the population is below 25 years.[19] So, an organisation can choose to view the youth bulge as an opportunity for the country or as a big challenge. Whichever of the two viewpoints an organisation adopts determines how they respond to and relate with the youth and the opportunities they offer them.

As ADE's interventions show, it works positively with the youth. The diocese engages the youth in activities that promote dialogues, mutual understanding, religious diversity, and intra- and inter-faith peaceful coexistence. The ADE's interventions focus on the reduction of tensions and incidents of violence. The diocese's approach emphasises inter-faith dialogues and mutual understanding. Implicitly, the government of Egypt has endorsed the ADE's model by supporting dialogues between religious leaders, scholars, and theologians from different faith backgrounds, mainly the Christian and Muslims. Therefore, the CRID project contributed to and advanced the ADE's approach. As noted earlier, the ADE previously enhanced interfaith approaches and dialogues through similar projects, among them *Together for Egypt* and *Tree of Hope*. This is why the research for this case study interpreted the ADE's approach from the broader peacebuilding framework. That is, the researchers viewed the ADE's work of promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogues, and peaceful coexistence, as an aspect of peacebuilding because these subjects are an integral part of peacebuilding thinking and interventions.

# Methodology

The research applied a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to the ADE's *Communities Richer in Diversity* initiative. The topic of shaping the behaviour of the youth was chosen to generate an understanding of how interfaith interventions influence the process of behaviour change, especially among the youth. The researcher focused on the project because it advanced ADE's previous work of promoting peacebuilding interventions in Egypt. The study offered an opportunity to examine how faith-based organisations contribute to peacebuilding by transforming the behaviour of the youth. Thus, the research employed the following methods.

**Desk review**: The research reviewed collected evidence through reviewing 16 secondary sources that focused on youth and peacebuilding from various research angles (from social conflict, coexistence work, building sustainable peace, the interreligious role of peacebuilding, and the integration of the grassroots level especially the youth, to the elements that shape the emerging youth). The review included a detailed analysis of a baseline line report, four field reports, the end of the project report, and two documentary videos. For easy access to reports and other empirical data, the researchers worked closely with Faith to Action Network's secretariat and the ADE's team throughout the data collection and writing period.

**Outcome mapping (OM)**: The research also selected and applied outcome mapping as an important tool for articulating the change that happens in the youth's behaviour.

The tool helped in observing the logical flow of *Communities Richer in Diversity* interfaith interventions that reflected the shaping of the youth behaviour. Outcome mapping depicted the relationship between objectives and the intended results. These results include both short-and long-term outcomes and reflect changes at different levels.

***Semi-structured interviews***: The research used semi-structured interviews to complement textual review and outcome mapping. The primary researcher in Egypt interviewed 7 ADE staff members, 8 Muslim and Christian religious leaders, and 50 young men and women from diverse religions, cultures, levels of education, and gender. This aspect of the research verified the changes in the youth attitudes and behaviours towards the 'Other' who differed in religion or/and culture in the specific context of Egypt. Also, it gave the researchers a better insight into the various perspectives that contributed to shaping youth behaviour. Further, the primary researcher found it essential to discuss the interventions' expected results with the project staff members. Participating youth were also interviewed to find out how the various activities helped them in developing their understanding and shaping their attitudes and behaviours towards the 'Other' who is different in religion and/or culture. For the telephone interviews, the primary researcher used mobile phones and online social media tools that comprised of conversations and chatting as methods due to COVID-19 restrictions. All interviewees were selected from the group that participated or/ and attended *Better Together* interventions.

# Analytical Approach

The paper investigates how and why participants changed their behaviours to "promote cultural diversity and respect for the equal dignity of all people in Egypt" as defined in the project's expected impact. The analysis draws on insights from behavioural theories and peacebuilding perspectives. According to the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), which is one of the closely interrelated family of theories that adopt a cognitive approach to explaining behaviour that centres on individuals' attitudes and beliefs, behaviour is a function of individuals' pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions. An individual's decision to engage in a particular behaviour is based on the expected outcomes because of performing the behaviour. This requires analysing an individual's basic motivation to act (Doswell, et al. 2011). Colman (2015) argues that stronger intentions lead to increased effort to perform the behaviour, which also increases the likelihood of the behaviour to be performed. TPB postulates that attitudes and behavioural intentions occur within the framework of social norms and are self-regulated by perceived behavioural control (O'Brien, L., et al. 2017).

Evidence from research suggests that these elements can predict 20-30% of the variance in behaviour brought about via interventions and a greater proportion of intention

(Armitage and Conner 2001; Nisbet and Gick 2008; and Webb et al 2010). The theory conceptualises behaviour as human 'practices' (ways of doing, 'routinised behaviour', habits) which are arrangements of various interconnected elements, such as physical and mental activities, norms, meanings, technology use, knowledge, which form people's actions or 'behaviour' as part of their everyday lives (Reckwitz 2002).

The paper employs the above theoretical insights to analyse the change experienced by the youth of Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima, and Madient El-Salam. The paper's foundational premise is that the behaviour of young men and women in the three slums does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, it is very much affected and shaped by their environment. Therefore, the ADE made deliberate efforts to reach out to these young men and women because they belong to groups that are disproportionately affected by poverty, illiteracy, and violence in the slums. The young men and women include the disabled and those who are from minority communities.

The ADE believed that giving them the opportunity of being together and providing physically, socially, and emotionally safe and supportive spaces to share their experiences and to express their feelings, threats, worries, and fears helped them change their behaviours. Providing them with knowledge about the 'others' who come from different faiths or cultures, whether through the shared experiences or the awareness sessions, changed their perceptions and helped them develop positive attitudes towards 'others'. As the above behavioural insights predict, the ADE's joint activities created the behavioural intentions that helped the youth in the slums change their attitudes and practices and shaped their behaviours in general.

Understanding the change experienced by youth in the three slums required additional insights from peacebuilding. This is because changing youth behaviour, especially those exposed to the context of extremism, is a prerequisite to the cessation of violence and conflict prevention in the future. According to Maria Sellevold (2012), there are three approaches to addressing youth in peacebuilding contexts. The rights-based approach focuses on the youth as victims, the economic approach that emphasises the role of youth as threats, and the socio-political approach that sees youths' potential as actors in peacebuilding. The latter approach looks at how youth can promote peace. It centres on the voices of young people; their perceptions, ideas, and roles, which could reveal the root causes of conflict. Therefore, giving youth the chance to participate in peacebuilding interventions that lead to sustainable peace is very essential (Sellevold, 2012). Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus (2014) similarly argued for the inclusion of young people's own experiences and identification of problems as a way of preventing these problems in the future.

Therefore, the ADE is convinced that the changed youth will be active advocates of tolerance, religious diversity, and peaceful coexistence. From this standpoint, young

men and women are valuable agents of change, and their contributions should be supported. In essence, the ADE values young men and women as agents of peacebuilding. The paper recognises the ADE's focus on empathy, pro-social behaviours, and civic engagement, which, as stated by McKeown and Taylor (2017a), may all be antecedents for later peacebuilding. Lastly, the paper analyses ADE's contribution to making these young men and women actors for developing their societies.

# ADE's Pathway for Change

Based on previous experience and successes, the ADE team knew that discussing sensitive cultural and religious topics is more effective through events/group sessions that are hosted within the communities facing those issues. Such group sessions bring together the diversity of beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences and, thus, lead to interesting discussions and more compelling content, leaving a lasting impact on the community. Therefore, the ADE planned interventions aimed to develop mutual understanding among the various Muslim and Coptic youth to shape their behaviours and inspire them to build sustainable peace within their communities. Through the *Communities Richer in Diversity* project, the ADE aimed to promote coexistence and self-development with the hope that individuals from different religions could coexist peacefully. In turn, those individuals would influence and motivate their families and communities. In other words, the ADE's model of change had two levels: individual change and relational change. Both levels correspond with CRID's framework of transformation that seeks changes at the individual, relational, and structural levels. Changes at the individual level focused on perceptual and behavioural change, as argued in the previous section, and changes at the relational level focused on practice, group identities, and groups relations.

The ADE's model addressed the issue of coexistence at the grassroots because, according to ADE staff members, extremist groups targeted these people, especially the uneducated ones. The ADE project aimed to use the lessons of its previous interfaith dialogues by moving them from the "top" to the "bottom", from the level of religious leaders to the grassroots. The project also combined educational activities, including seminars, discussions, and dialogues, with practical activities such as art sessions, football leagues, and community development activities. All aimed at helping the participants to overcome isolation and engage with each other, regardless of their religion, doctrine, or gender. Also, this could achieve positive change in both individual and group relations. The ADE referred to this approach as 'the practical, daily, life dialogue' between ordinary people in society. The approach enhanced the capacities of the individuals and groups and helped them to work together as they enjoyed cultural, artistic, and other developmental activities.

The ADE presented the "discourse through art" through cultural sessions on the importance of acceptance and peaceful coexistence. For example, music, drums, painting, and photography sessions introduced new lessons and shared different religious viewpoints that otherwise may not be accepted. The ADE team also used innovative ways to deal with conflict through visual art sessions like painting, handicrafts, and photography. Story-telling sessions allowed everyone to share their



*ADE's pantomime actors in action at the Gusour Centre Stage*

personal and inspirational stories with their peers, who come from different cultures. Participants had the chance to learn about each other's culture in the same space in a way that nurtured mutual understanding. Such joint participation built mutual cross-religious understanding as the participants realised that they had common humanity. Meanwhile, short folk tales from their own cultures and faiths created a bridge, while pantomimes fired their imaginations as they fully incorporated the deaf participants. Such incorporation built the confidence of the deaf participants.

Further, the ADE used the Gusour Centre as the space for individual and relational transformation. Located inside a church, the Centre became the space for fostering harmony and demystifying certain viewpoints and prejudices as the participants (Muslims and Christians, deaf and speaking) socialised and understood each other's culture in a friendly environment. Subsequently, the space broke the Muslims' fear of entering Christian worship places and challenged pre-conceived prejudices. The other activities, such as integration and dialogue sessions and sports sessions in the ADE training centre, developed the participants' skills, built their self-confidence, and promoted knowledge and understanding of each other's cultures and viewpoints. The Centre also served as an educational space for youth to gain more knowledge during their learning development. Through physical education and sports sessions, young men and women improved their cultural interactions.

Meanwhile, the community development activities encouraged young men and women to participate in community activities that contributed to peaceful coexistence. These activities helped in covering some of the communities' continual needs, including ordered and well-lit streets and well-maintained public spaces. The ADE project participants became involved in cleaning and painting and the neighbourhood beautification programme. An important aspect of the beautification programme was involving the youth in solid waste management and other activities that served as alternatives to violence.

# Data and Evidence of Behaviour Change

The following outcome mapping table summarises the ADE's project achievements, drawing on the analysis of the project documents and discussions with the project staff members. The table illustrates and traces the implemented activities according to the above insights of the behaviour change theory. The table shows the problem statement, target groups, interventions that led to shaping the behaviour of the target youth, the helping and hindering factors that affected this process. It also shows the achieved personal and development outcomes at different levels and the expected impact in the long term.

| Problem statement | | |
|---|---|---|
| In the recent past, youth from the three sprawling ashwa'iyyat or slums of Cairo – Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima and Madient El-Salam - have been exposed to extreme ideas that affect their perceptions towards "others", the value of peaceful coexistence, and the use of violence. This has contributed to increased tensions between their neighbourhood's majority Muslim population and its minority Christian population. | | |
| **Who participated?** | **Helping factors** | **Hindering factors** |
| 2467 young male and female who were in danger of being subjected to or were affected by radicalisation participated in the ADE interventions. Also, some young religious leaders took an active role in the project activities. | • The political will encouraged interfaith dialogues.<br>• Supportive policy context for youth participation in general.<br>• Strong support from senior religious leaders.<br>• Successful previous experience of ADE in this domain.<br>• Availability of required funds. | • Fears of some youth to participate in the project activities.<br>• The sensitivity of the topic in Egyptian society.<br>• Suspicion by the target youth especially at the beginning of the project.<br>• Limited democratic space.<br>• Discrimination based on gender and religion. Regulations to contain the COVID19 pandemic delayed some activities. |
| **Interventions** | Discourse through art<br>• Music, drums, art, and photography sessions<br>• Story-telling sessions and pantomime plays | Integration and dialogue<br>• Training workshops<br>• Physical education and sports sessions. |
| | | Community development activities<br>• Cleaning, painting, and beautification<br>• Solid waste management activities |

| Process | • Cultural sessions on the importance of acceptance and peaceful co-existence were presented. For example, music, drums, art, and photography sessions introduced new lessons and shared different religious viewpoints that otherwise may not be accepted.<br>• Introducing effective ways to deal with conflict through various art sessions.<br>• Story-telling sessions allowed everyone to share their personal and inspirational stories with their peers who come from different cultures. As participants had the chance to learn about each other's culture on an equal footing, mutual understanding was nurtured. This helped to build mutual understanding through a blend of curiosity, while close listening and the realisation that participants have a lot in common. Besides, using pantomime plays with the deaf community for entertainment and building self-confidence contributed to inclusion. | • Providing training workshops as well as sports sessions in the ADE training centre which is used to develop the participants' skills, gain self-confidence and knowledge while exploring each other's cultures and views.<br>• The centre also served as an educational centre for youth to gain more awareness during their learning development. Through physical education and sports sessions, youth improved their cultural interactions. | • Helping the participants to model for their community peaceful activities that lead to harmony instead of conflict. These activities helped in covering some of the communities' continual needs.<br>• It is believed that ordered and well-lit streets and well-maintained public spaces discourage violence and discrimination.<br>• The ADE contributed through the cleaning and painting project. Through the neighbourhood beautification programme, youth were not only involved in solid waste management in their community, but also in activities that served as alternatives to violence. |
|---|---|---|---|

| Personal Outcomes | | • Increased knowledge, self-confidence, and resilience.<br>• Changes in attitudes and behaviour.<br>• Raising voices and reducing the sense of marginalisation.<br>• Enhancing life skills as well as communication skills. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intermediate Development Outcomes | • Enhanced the understanding, tolerance, and respect for cultural and religious diversity among 2,467 youth.<br>• Pluralist discourses, practices, and tools were promoted amongst 60 religious' leaders, and 426 youth leaders in Egypt.<br>• Improved leadership capacity of 60 religious' leaders, and 426 youth leaders. | • Increased knowledge about the commonalities and differences between religious groups for 2,467 male and female youth.<br>• Negative stereotypes of different faiths demystified for the target groups | • 655 Egyptian youth of different faiths came together and participated in innovative activities. |
| Ultimate Development Outcomes | • Improved inter-religious relations among youth in 3 neglected communities (Misr EL-Kadima, Ezpet El-Nakhal, and Madinet El-Salam) in Greater Cairo.<br>• Enhanced tolerance and respect for cultural and religious diversity among 2,467 (male and female) Egyptian youth | | |
| Expected impact | To influence the Egyptian youth behaviour in promoting cultural diversity and respecting the equal dignity of all people in Egypt. | | |

The table shows the various interventions and their outcomes, which helped the youth in the three slums to change their perceptions, attitudes, and values. The interventions turned them into more open and tolerant citizens, who accepted the 'other' regardless of their differences in religion, culture, and gender. Focusing on personal development outcomes, frequen interventions enhanced personal development and created some positive change. The changes led to other wider development outcomes in the short, medium, or long-term. These outcomes are providing knowledge, shaping attitudes, and building skills that build self-confidence and resilience. Others are encouraging the adoption of values that engendered behaviour change among young men and women.

The analysis shows that participants increased their knowledge about other young men and women from different religions and dispelled existing stereotypes and prejudices. As a participant reported at the beginning of the project: "They have very little knowledge about others, who are from a different religion. They view them as fanatics. They blame them for deciding matters without paying attention to others from a different religion".[22] Another interviewee shared similar sentiments, "I do not understand the others from a different religion. I don't understand their way of thinking".[23] Such lack of understanding was widespread in the slums. As a male youth from Ezpet El-Nakhel revealed:

> "I had a misconception about the Christians and their practices in the church. I thought that they were doing improper actions and they named those actions prayers. I realise I was wrong about those issues. Now I know that I was ignorant. I lacked knowledge about them and their religion. But they are my neighbours and my people."[24]

Another Christian female youth mentioned that she was afraid of dealing with the Muslim youth as she thought that the Islam religion ordered them to ransack the money of Christians and spoil their women and girls. But now, after knowing about their religious values, she understood that it was not religion; it was a misinterpretation of some verses of the Qur'an.[25]

Many youths reported that their knowledge had increased because of their participation in the various project interventions. Just before the end of the project, 86.0% of youth who were interviewed indicated that they knew a lot of elements about the other religion. Similarly, 72% of youth were aware of their similarities with people of the other religion. 76% of youth were now aware of the differences between the two religions. A wide range of interventions yielded personal development outcomes in youth lives generally. Some young men and women reported changes in their knowledge, self-confidence, and resilience, indicating that their participation in most interventions was a great learning experience. Additionally, the biggest increase in knowledge of each other resulted from activities that enabled knowledge exchange.

*Story tellers in an ADE story telling workshop*

Moreover, story-telling sessions, drum circles, and pantomimes contributed to increasing their self-confidence and social capital. During interviews, youth stated how they gained "energy" and felt "empowered". They described "stronger bonds", increased "friendships", "joint activities", and "community loyalty". For example, one of the drum circle participants said: "During the drum circle, I felt that I am not only raising the drum sound but also my voice to be heard loudly. I felt that I gain and release energy within others who are drumming with me in the circle."[26] Another female participant reflected: "While drumming, I felt that we are singing one common song in a fabulous harmony without pronouncing any words. Our minds were together as singers. I felt empowered and inspired."[27] A third male participant explained:

> "The drum circle, in a magical way, developed a strong bond among us. All participants forgot about their differences and remembered only one thing: we should all follow the rhythm and express ourselves. It was such an excellent spiritual experience that made good use of our values, energies, life principles regardless of our religious differences."[28]

Similarly, those who participated in storytelling and pantomime workshops mentioned that they became familiar with each other during rehearsals and developed friendships. Thereafter, they sometimes organised outings and frequently held get-togethers. While

*A trainer showing participants how to drum in an ADE's drum circle session.*

acting or telling the stories, they felt they were expressing their true feelings, sharing their happiness and their sorrows in front of others freely. Such sharing was healing because it helped them release a lot of pain.[29]

Indeed, 80% of youths that were interviewed during the research for this case study reported that they currently engage in conversations with their neighbours and friends of different religions, cultures, and traditions regularly. 84% of them said that they now understood their friends' and neighbours' viewpoints. This was a huge improvement from the baseline survey when only 40% engaged in conversations with their diverse neighbours, and only 34% understood their neighbour's viewpoint. For example, 30 Muslim and Christian youth in Ezbet El-Nakhal participated in beautification activities to develop their area. They also organised an exhibition to help some local women to market their products and sell them. Such understanding, interactions, and working together had not been seen before the ADE's project interventions.

Further, young men and women enhanced their attitudes and values. Participating in interfaith community development activities played an essential role in changing attitudes on issues such as gender equality, a stigma that is associated with any differences, and sensitivity toward other religious groups. Working together in community development activities changed their attitudes towards the acceptance of the other and peaceful coexistence. Also, other interventions through which youth developed and expressed their views, such as sports activities, contributed to attitude change. For example, in Misr El-Kadima, 70 deaf people (50% Muslims& 50% Christian)

came together and organised a cleaning, painting, planting campaign in the oldest street of Misr El-Kadima known as Game'a Amor St. They reflected together while developing their community. According to one male deaf youth from Misr El-Kadima, "I was so proud because all the deaf, Muslims and Christians, were helping out to achieve something. All the deaf felt like contributing to development, which is our national duty to Egypt."[30]

Research for this case study found that 96% of the youth who participated in the ADE activities changed their general attitude towards other people from different religious beliefs and cultures. It also found that 88% of them are now dealing with their neighbours and friends from other religions equally compared to 64% who said the same during the baseline survey. Further, the research found that more than 50% of the participants can overwhelmingly trust those from other religions equally and deal with them with equal respect compared to 26% during the baseline survey.

During the research for this case study, all participants responded to the question of values they gained and promoted after they participated in the ADE activities. All mentioned "love, honour, solidarity, and acceptance of others" as the most important personal values that they developed during their participation in the Communities Richer in Diversity activities. They acquired and enhanced these values during their involvement in ADE's activities. According to a female youth who participated in the activities at the Gusour Centre, "our painting and creativity in sculptures and beautiful drawings helped us change extremism to loving Egypt our home country. Now I truly see no difference between Muslims and Christians. We are all Human."[31]

Additionally, the youth expressed various viewpoints that reflected the changes in their behaviours toward themselves and towards the whole community. It was evident that interventions by the Communities Richer in Diversity project led to positive behavioural change among the youth during the community development activities. These activities created common interests and goals among the youth, which inspired them to cooperate and work together in a friendly environment. For example, in Madinat El-Salam, 20 Muslim and Christian youth organised a campaign to raise the awareness of their neighbours on eco-friendly methods of environmental cleaning. A male youth who participated in a cleaning campaign explained, "we wouldn't say we were partners. I mean Muslim and Coptic youths because we were one family. Nothing but love existed; we all stood up and rose together."[32]   Therefore, using various techniques, the ADE played a vital role in shaping youth behaviours. The free space of interaction, working together, and discussing new ideas and information with others strengthened the youth's commitment to change.

Indeed, this paper argues that participation in cleaning, painting, and beautification work promoted changes in attitudes toward their communities and their members regardless of their religious differences. During the research for this paper, 94% of interviewees

revealed that they perceived individuals with a different religious background primarily as individuals rather than as members of specific religious communities. They now felt they could engage with them without emphasising their religious affiliations. They added that they now interacted cooperatively and not competitively. Such changes affirmed the sentiments of Bishop Mouner Hanna. According to the Bishop,

> "We trust that only the work of our own hands will develop our own country, especially that of our Muslim and Copts youth, who have come together and developed a mutual understanding. They are very energetic and able to perform miracles. Let us cooperate and encourage them to build our Egypt".[33]

The Grand Imam of Egypt, Dr Ali Gomaa, also shared a similar viewpoint. In his words,

> "This is not a philosophy far from reality, these are real thoughts being implemented through practical initiatives in different locations. The spread of good is stronger and faster than the spread of evil."[34]

Buttressing those arguments, Saleem Wassef, the ADE's Programs Manager concluded, ''these initiatives that the Egyptian youth implemented in these three communities were all about real transformation inside the youths who peacefully dealt together after we shaped their behaviours." In summary, therefore, the ADE's interfaith activities "enhanced the understanding of tolerance, and respect for cultural and religious diversity among 2,467 youth, promoted the pluralist discourses and practices amongst 60 religious' leaders and 426 youth leaders." With some helping factors regarding the improved political situation, and supportive policy context for youth participation in general, the project contributed to improve inter-religious relations among youth in 3 neglected communities, namely, Misr El-Kadima, Ezpet El-Nakhel, and Madinet El-Salam in Greater Cairo.

## Discussion: Transforming Individuals and Relations

From the foregoing evidence, the paper argues that the ADE's pathway for change, which it has applied to CRID interventions, can be understood, and universalised, using the perspectives of behaviour change as postulated in the theory of planned behaviour action (TPB). As noted earlier, social scientists use TPB to predict how individuals will behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions. The theory postulates that attitude, subject norms, and perceived behavioural control together shape an individual's behavioural intentions and behaviours. It also postulates that the intention to perform a certain behaviour precedes the actual behaviour. This behavioural intention comes because of the belief that performing the behaviour will lead to a specific outcome.

*A male participant in an ADE painting activity*

The research found that the ADE Communities Richer in Diversity interventions synthesised behavioural approaches and peacebuilding perspectives. As evidence adduced in the previous section shows, the ADE team designed their interventions to create positive attitudes and behavioural intentions. Specifically, the ADE interventions were aimed at promoting the values of tolerance and acceptance of differences so that the targeted youth can change and perform positive behaviours. Such interventions were in line with the TPB's postulate that intentions to do a certain action as shaped by the pre-existing attitudes are central to behaviour change.

Therefore, the ADE deliberately targeted changing attitudes and pre-existing prejudices. Based on previous experience, the ADE deliberately instituted activities that transformed attitudes and mindsets, including knowledge and active participation in joint interfaith visual and performance arts and community work. Armed with the belief that performing the behaviours would lead to specific outcomes, as the theory states, the ADE team involved the youth in interventions that inspired them and encouraged them to be peace agents and community builders. Activities such as discourse through art aimed to change the pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions by using the drum rhythms and non-verbal pantomimes which symbolised oneness and common collective identity. Such unity and a common civic identity demonstrated common humanity regardless of one's religion or culture. Thus, the ADE demonstrated that understanding and acceptance of common humanity was central to acceptance of the 'other' and peaceful co-existence. In turn, acceptance of the 'other' would encourage the youth to build a culture of peace.

*A young woman participating in an ADE sculpting activity*

Further, in line with TPB's postulates, the evidence adduced in the preceding section shows that the ADE interventions intended to change the pre-existing prejudices and transform adversarial relations between young men and women from different religions. This is because the ADE empowered the participating youth with knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes towards each other and their poor, marginalised, and vulnerable communities. Other activities under visual and performing arts and community work improved communication between the participating youth, built confidence, improved self-identity, demystified certain pre-existing attitudes and instilled a sense of belonging. Again, this is in line with the theory of planned behaviour because improved communication, regular interactions and sharing of experiences, and an awareness of their common civic identity are a prelude to behaviour change and understanding and resolution of contested viewpoints and beliefs.

In essence, the ADE interventions created free spaces in which participants could openly discuss contesting viewpoints and beliefs, deconstruct all pre-existing stereotypes, and demystify all prejudices. The TPB speaks to such evidence of free spaces of engagement as the intention to perform a certain behaviour precedes the actual behaviour. So, the free space promoted interactions that allowed an understanding of different viewpoints, the building of confidence and trust, sharing of interests around common issues, and the building of new skills. In other words, the ADE's interventions fostered changes at the individual and relational levels as the TPB postulates and as articulated in the ADE's model of change and CRID's framework of transformation.

*Theatre actors in action at the ADE's Gusour Centre*

Further, the research found that the ADE developed activities that aimed at changing pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions. These activities promoted skills such as active listening and close observation. Performing arts activities such as drums, non-verbal pantomime workshops, and story-telling sessions required active listening or close observation. Such skills are central to behaviour change as the TPB emphasises because they encouraged the youth to create positive attitudes, behavioural intentions, and values such as tolerance, love, cooperation, and acceptance of the 'other'. Thus, the ADE achieved its goal of creating new positive intentions to shape youth behaviour by correcting misconceptions and emphasising the importance of religious and cultural diversity.

According to the TPB, an individual's decision to engage in a particular behaviour is based on the expected outcomes. Therefore, stronger intentions lead to increased effort to perform the behaviour or to change the behaviour. This insight applies to ADE interventions because most of the youth whom the research interviewed responded that they had changed their behaviours after participating in ADE activities. All indicated that they had advanced their ability to control self-perceptions, to listen to the concerns of others, and to avoid making judgements about others. So, the ADE activities facilitated and promoted the attainment of these impressive behavioural outcomes. While storytelling, film sessions, drum circles, pantomime workshops, and painting fired their imaginations and allowed the involved youth an opportunity to express their viewpoints, concerns, and pre-existing prejudices, community activities such as cleaning and beautification campaigns gave them a chance to work together, build confidence and trust, and improve group solidarity. Such community activities fostered a feeling of belonging and improved the collective identity.

*Participants watching a film at the ADE's Gusour Centre.*

In turn, improved group solidarity and collective identity enhanced their common humanity and gave them a chance to contribute to developing their communities. Again, this is in line with the TPB's postulate that the intention to perform a certain behaviour changes the performer's practices. The ADE designed those activities to change the behaviour of the involved youth, while the youth who performed those



*Participants discussing a film at the ADE's Gusour Centre.*

activities changed their attitudes and practices as intended. In summary, therefore, the ADE activities transformed not just the behaviours of the involved youth but also relationships and practices as intended in the ADE and CRID models of transformation. Indeed, 76% of the youth, whom the research interviewed during primary data collection for this paper revealed that they have realised the best approach to dealing with someone from a different religion or culture is collaboration and contribution to common activities.

Lastly, the theory avers that human 'practices' and 'routinised behaviour', create habits that become the basis for various activities and social norms. In line with this argument, the ADE designed and implemented different activities which created a 'routinised behaviour' such as common responses to the drum rhythms or the non-verbal pantomime actors. In turn, storytelling and film discussions fired their imaginations and reinforced the messages of oneness, common humanity, and a common future. Continuously repeating these activities led to a 'routinised practice' and contributed to positive change at the personal and relational levels. Indeed, 90% of interviewees during the research for this paper responded that they had experienced positive personal transformation in their attitudes and behaviours. For example, while some reported that they had gained many new friendships and felt accepted by others, others praised the various activities for promoting group solidarity and for helping them improve and beautify their local communities. Overall, therefore, this section concludes that the ADE's interventions fostered behavioural changes at the individual and relational levels as postulated in the TPB, as articulated in the ADE's model of change, and espoused in the CRID's framework of transformation.

# Conclusion

This case study has analysed the model that the ADE followed when implementing the *Communities Richer in Diversity* project in three slums, Ezbet El-Nakhel, Miser El-Kadima, and Madient El-Salam, in Cairo, Egypt. The paper has adduced primary empirical data, as collected from the ADE team and participating young men and women, and secondary data from ADE and other project documents. Analysing the evidence using the theory of planned behaviour, the paper has argued that the ADE implemented activities in order to change the behaviours of the targeted youth. Such activities sought to impart knowledge and skills that demystified and deconstructed their pre-existing prejudices, beliefs, and attitudes towards 'others' from different faiths and cultures. While these interfaith interventions employed various methods and approaches that imparted skills and knowledge on cultural diversity and peaceful co-existence, the ADE model sought to engender change at the individual and relational levels. Informed by previous interventions in the three informal settlements, the ADE model implemented activities that improved social harmony, religious and cultural diversity, and peaceful coexistence.

As observed in the discussion section, the ADE activities promoted interactions between youth from different religions and cultures, improved knowledge, instilled new skills, built confidence, enhanced self-identity, and improved group solidarity and collective identity. Among the values that the involved youth enhanced were tolerance, acceptance, and respect for religious and cultural diversity. Overall, the ADE interventions of visual and performing arts and community work contributed to the transformation of youth behaviour and encouraged them to change their communities. Ultimately, the ADE promoted religious and cultural diversity and set the foundation for a long-term peaceful coexistence in the three slums of Cairo.

# Endnotes

1 18 to 29 years old is the official definition of youth according to documents from the government of Egypt. See Capmas https://www.capmas.gov.eg. Also, UN Security Council Resolution (UNSC) 2250 (August 2017) on Youth, Peace and Security defines "youth" as people aged from 18–29 years.

2 For the intersection between religion and culture, including differences between them, see 'Religion and Culture: Revisiting a Close Relative' by Jaco Beyersin *Hts Theological Studies, Volume 73, No 1, August 2017, pages 1-9; Religion and Culture* by Christopher Dawson (2013), Washington: The Catholic University of America Press; *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways by Olivier Roy (2013)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3 For an example of the study on the relationship between slums, urban dispossession, and violent extremism in Cairo, see 'Radical Religion and the Habitus of the Dispossessed: Does Islamic Militancy Have an Urban Ecology?' by Asef Bayat in International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol 31, No 3, 2007, pages 579-590.

4 Saleem Wassef, the ADE Programs Manager, at the ADE offices in Cairo, telephone interview, 15 December 2020; for selected studies on religious intolerance and violence in Egypt, see 'The Copts—Equal, Protected or Persecuted? The Impact of Islamization on Muslim-Christian Relations in Modern Egypt' by David Zeidan in *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, Volume 10, No 1, 1999, pages 53-67; 'The 'Mediation' of Muslim–Christian Relations in Egypt: The Strategies and Discourses of the Official Egyptian Press During Mubarak's Presidency by Elizabeth Iskander in *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, Volume 23, No 1, 2012, pages 31-44; and 'Toleration or Recognition. Towards A New Account of Religious Diversity in Contemporary Egypt' by Samah Ahmed Farid, in *European Scientific Journal*, Vol 8, No. 1, 2012, pages 207 – 238.

5 Anglican Diocese of Egypt (ADE) Project Proposal, page 2.

6 Anglican Diocese of Egypt (ADE) Project Proposal, page 2

7 See Asef Bayat, Ibid.

8 Bishop Mouneer Hanna Anis's explanation in an undated ADE video documentary, which the ADE team shared with CRID in August 2019.

9 For details on slums and urban poverty in Egypt, see Poverty Lines in Greater Cairo: *Underestimating and Misrepresenting Poverty*, Working Paper Series 21 written by Sarah Sabry and published by International Institute for Environment and Development (2009). According to the paper, ashwa'iyyat is the Arabic word used for informal

settlements/slums in Egypt. The word means "random or haphazard". UN-Habitat calls them slums; the Egyptian government authorities refer to them as ashwa'iyyat, slums and informal settlements/areas, and categorise them as unsafe. See https://pubs.iied. org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/10572IIED.pdf. This paper will use the three words interchangeably.

10  Cairo Governorate data base, 2019  http://www.cairo.gov.eg/ar/Hay_Misr%20 ElQdema/Pages/DistrictAchievement.aspx?ArchCode=5

11 Cairo Governorate data base, Ibid

12 Saleem Wassef, ADE's Programs Manager. Telephone interview, 15 December2020.

13 Cairo Governorate data base, Ibid

14 A country profile by the UN-Habitat says that are 1171 informal settlements in Egypt. It further says that 60% of these settlements are in the Greater Cairo region. See https:// unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/Country%20Profile%20 Egypt%20English.pdf

15 Asef Bayat, ibid

16 Muslim Brotherhood is the premier Islamist organisation in Egypt. Founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1938, Muslim Brotherhood's ideology is "the importance of Sharia law, the mistrust if not hostility towards the West, and the return to a civilisational Islam, centred around practices that are considered to be those of Islam's origins. They also pursue common objectives aimed at preserving an Islamic civilization, creating an Islamic State, and establishing a Universalist and proselytizing vision of Islam. For selected studies on Muslim Brotherhood, see *The Muslim Brotherhood*:

*Evolution of an Islamist Movement* by Carrie Rosefsky Wickham (2015), Princeton: Princeton University Press; 'Islamists in Power: The Case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt' by Hesham Al-Awadi (2013), in *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, Vol 6, No 4, pages 539–551; The Muslim Brotherhood: Hasan al-Hudaybi and Ideology by Barbara Zollner (2008), London: Routledge

17 The Salafists explain that they only defend a religious vision and never a political doctrine. Salafists and Muslim Brothers, however, use different methods: while the Muslim Brotherhood chooses education, political activism, collective action and the changing of systems from the inside, Salafists prefer preaching, the training of Imams, the financing of places of worship and the promotion of a state-sponsored Salafism. For detailed analysis, see The Islamic Factory. https://www.institutmontaigne.org/ ressources/pdfs/publications/Short%20Version%2090%20pages.pdf.

18 Saleem Wassef, ADE Project Manager. Telephone Interview, 15 December 2020.

19 Capmas 2017, https://www.capmas.gov.eg/Pages/ShowPDF.aspx?page_id=/Admin/Pages%20Files/201710914947book.pdf

20 Saleem Wassef, ADE's Project Manager, telephone interview, 15 December 2020.

21 See the ADE project document" Better Together".

22 A participant of FGD, Madinet El-Salam Centre, 28 November 2020.

23 A participant of FGD, Ezbet El-Nakhal Centre, 30 November 2020.

24 Ahmed from Ezbet El-Nakhal, 3 December 2020, phone interview.

25 Nadia from Ezbet El-Nakhal, 3 December 2020, phone interview.

26 Saeid (a participant), Gusour Centre, 4 December 2020, telephone interview.

27 Wafaa (a participant), Gusour Centre, 5 December 2020, telephone interview.

28 Magdy (a participant), Gusour Centre, 5 December 2020, telephone interview.

29 Participants of FGD- Gusour Centre, on 29 November 2020.

30 A male youth from Misr El-Kadima, face-to-face interview, 29 November 2020.

31 A female participant at the Gusour Centre. Telephone interview 15 November 2020.

32  A male youth who participated in the cleaning campaign. Face-to-face interview, 15 November 2020.

33 A quote from the video "Together for Egypt development", The episcopal / Anglican Media Centre, 2019

34 A quote from the video "Together for Egypt development", The episcopal / Anglican Media Centre, 2019

35 Saleem Wassef, ADE's Project Manager. Telephone interview, 15 December 2020.

36 Saleem Wassef, ADE's Project Manager. Telephone interview, 15 December 2020.

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