



Interfaith Youth Core International Work Summary

Executive Summary

In the past ten years, Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) trained thousands of people in the framework, knowledge, and skill set required to transform religious diversity or religious tension into active interfaith cooperation.

IFYC has had a presence on six continents, including running programs in Australia, India, Qatar, and across Western Europe. IFYC's international experience includes broad networking and consultation, large public talks, intensive skill-based trainings with young people, and intensive leadership exchanges empowering youth to collaborate on local interfaith initiatives. Additionally, IFYC has worked in cooperation with U.S. Embassies around the world to provide trainings and intensive interfaith leadership experiences to young people, targeting those in marginalized religious communities.

The organization's work has had immediate and long-term impact. In 2009, IFYC organized and implemented its first year-long international initiative - *Youth Interfaith Leadership Program* in New Delhi, India. IFYC introduced a cohort of NGO leaders to the idea of interfaith cooperation as a means of building a robust civil society, and trained them to create and advance interfaith cooperation in their local communities. Additionally, IFYC organized a training institute that brought together 60 young leaders, youth service organizations, and interfaith groups to mobilize youth service projects in Delhi. In Western Europe, IFYC created a network of practitioners who share best practices and collaborate on programs that advance interfaith cooperation through service. Its mini-grant programs have catalyzed interfaith initiatives in the UK, India, Belgium and the Netherlands. In the UK, IFYC's programs sparked the creation of an "IFYC UK Exchange Program Alumni Network", in which participants are collaborating on interfaith projects summer and fall 2009. These activities will draw insular constituencies into interfaith activities and create networks of positive engagement between these different communities.

Below are highlights of interfaith service programs run by IFYC around the world:

1. Multiphase Projects:

January 2010 - December 2013: India

IFYC's *Interfaith Leaders for Social Action (ILSA)* will create a network of interfaith leaders who are oriented, equipped, and committed to advancing interfaith cooperation through social action in India. The program will create, mobilize, and empower a cohort of 50 interfaith leaders and 16 NGOs from New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Hyderabad who will be trained to build interfaith cooperation in their communities. These interfaith leaders will lead interfaith social action projects in their cities, specifically within communities where interfaith cooperation is challenged engaging 4,000 young people over three years.

January 2011 – December 2011: United Kingdom

IFYC and Three Faiths Forum (London, UK) launched a partnership through the “Interfaith Connectors” program, an interfaith education and leadership training opportunity for first- and second-year university students based in London. Twelve interfaith leaders from four London universities received intensive training and now lead dialogue experiences for secondary school students in addition to organizing social-action projects on their campuses.

January 2010 – December 2010: United Kingdom

IFYC organized and implemented the UK Campus Program in partnership with the National Union of Students (NUS), Interfaith Action, and Three Faiths Forum. This program mobilized and trained interfaith youth leaders from 10 UK-based universities to organize interfaith service-learning projects in their campus communities. IFYC staff also led campus visits and advanced trainings at four universities that received mini-grants for implementing social-action projects during National Interfaith Week in November 2010.

September 2009 – July 2010: India

IFYC organized and implemented an NGO-focused interfaith leadership program in New Delhi, India that introduced a cohort of NGO leaders to the idea of interfaith cooperation as a means of building a robust civil society, and trained them to create and advance interfaith cooperation in their local communities. These NGOs organized a training institute that brought together 60 young leaders, youth service organizations, and interfaith groups to catalyze and mobilize youth service projects in Delhi, India.

- II. *Interfaith Leadership Trainings:* IFYC delivered basic and intermediate trainings for hundreds of emerging leaders in each country to equip them with the framework, knowledgebase, and skillset to lead interfaith service in their communities.

April 2010: Qatar (Northwestern University – Qatar, Education City)

Two IFYC trainers conducted a one day day training program and several additional trainings focusing on building interfaith cooperation at Education City. These trainings reached students from NU-Q, CMU, Georgetown University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Faculty of Islamic Studies. The trainings reached approximately 150 students and staff at Education City.

November 2009: Australia (Monash University, Melbourne)

Two IFYC trainers conducted a two day training program at Monash University with a religiously diverse group of 35 young interfaith leaders in Melbourne. These trainings also focused on sharing best practices of existing interfaith initiatives in the city and cultivating new project ideas for future collaboration.

February 2009: United Kingdom

Two IFYC trainers conducted a Religious Pluralism Training Tour in the United Kingdom, conducting trainings in London and Manchester in the UK.

February 2009: Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain

Two IFYC trainers conducted a religious pluralism training tour through Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, and Italy, conducting trainings in Brussels, Ghent,



Rotterdam, Paris, Barcelona, Turin and Milan. The trainings reached approximately 400 people.

- III. *Speaking and Media Tours*: International speaking tours grant IFYC the opportunity to act as citizen diplomats to spread the vision of interfaith service and expand the network of interfaith leaders who are communicating with one another globally. Events range from small workshops to keynotes at large regional conferences.

September 2010: Kuwait/Jordan

IFYC Alum, Randa Kuziez, visited and presented at NGOs as well as youth and community groups in Jordan and Kuwait discussing "Partnerships for a Collective Future" by building youth activism and religious pluralism. Additionally, Randa led bilingual (Arabic and English) trainings on an introduction to interfaith cooperation.

June/July 2010: Kazakhstan

IFYC Staff member Chantal McGill traveled with two alumni of the Faiths Act Fellowship to Astana, Kazakhstan to speak on behalf of the State Department at the conference for Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The conference centered on religious bigotry and discrimination, focusing primarily on anti-semitism and islamophobia.

August 2009: Indonesia

Zeenat Rahman spoke at universities, NGOs, think tanks, and Islamic and secondary schools in Jakarta, Solo, Salatiga, Ambon, Palembang, and Lampung on the importance of interfaith leadership and tolerance in multicultural, multidemocratic society.

February/March 2009: India

Dr. Eboo Patel traveled through India to New Delhi, Bhopal and Mumbai on a speaking tour commemorating the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s pilgrimage to India, inspired by Gandhi's commitment to non-violent resistance.

May/June 2008: Netherlands

Hind Makki, Leadership Associate, participated in a delegation as part of the "Muslim Youth Project" in the Netherlands, the purpose of which was to compare Dutch and American governmental, religious, and community programs intended to support and integrate Muslims (particularly Muslim youth) in society.

April 2008: United Kingdom

Dr. Eboo Patel was a distinguished guest of the U.S. Embassy in London, where he presented a keynote address commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. at Westminster Abbey; spoke about his book, *Acts of Faith*, at the British Library; and attended a private meeting with former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, for the Tony Blair Faith Foundation.

December 2007: Italy, France, Spain, United Kingdom

Zeenat Rahman participated in the Citizen Dialogue Program, where she spoke to Muslim community-focused leaders, organizations, and public forums in Milan, Rome, Turin, Lyon, Paris, Marseilles, and London.

- IV. *Exchanges*: International exchanges offer the opportunity for participants to receive intensive interfaith leadership training from IFYC trainers. They also observe best



practices in American civil society through site visits to other NGO's, faith communities, and training from other select organizations.

May 2009

IFYC hosted a contingent of UK youth workers who work in marginalized communities for a two-week program focusing on cultivating interfaith leadership skills. The program will highlight the Muslim American community and its role in civil society as a key example of America's vibrant pluralism.

March 2008

IFYC partnered with the U.S. Embassy in the UK to organize and host a cohort of high school students chosen for a competitive fellowship called the Windsor Fellowship Program. IFYC coordinated a three-city tour including Chicago, IL; Washington, DC; and Memphis, TN.

Winter 2006 and Summer 2007

IFYC led an exchange between 40 young people in Chicago, the U.S., and Amman, Jordan. This exchange was inspired by a partnership between Queen Rania of Jordan and Dr. Eboo Patel, formed at the Clinton Global Initiative.

- V. *International Visitor Meetings:* IFYC regularly hosts international delegations in its Chicago office, where IFYC staff facilitate a conversation with delegates about the importance of developing young leaders equipped to promote community relationships across diverse faiths. Discussions also cover the impact of interfaith dialogue, and the ways that Muslims engage religious and civic life in the U.S.

In the past several years, IFYC has hosted delegations from the following countries, among others:

- Saudi Arabia
- Jordan
- Albania
- Kyrgyzstan
- The Netherlands
- Iraq
- Russia
- Denmark
- Palestine & Israel
- Italy
- Bahrain
- Macedonia
- Bhutan
- Pakistan
- Egypt
- Northern Ireland

