

## VOLUNTEERING FOR PEACE CC

**FAITHS AND TRADITIONS REPRESENTED IN CC:** Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian, Protestant, Sunni, Roman

**LOCATION OF CC:** Palestine

**KEY AREAS OF FOCUS:** Environment, Peacebuilding, interfaith, Youth, Women and Development, IDP

### **QUESTIONS:**

**1. What is the current religious/cultural/social context in the area where your CC is working?**

We work in different sectors; including youth, intercultural exchanges, environment ([www.urenv.net](http://www.urenv.net)), and tourism [www.visithebron.ps](http://www.visithebron.ps) in a country that has a good diversity of people coming from different faith groups. Our activities are based in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Nablus. Each city has a unique religious diversity.

**2. Why is interfaith/intercultural bridge building needed in the area where your CC works?**

Interfaith and intercultural bridge building are very important in our work and we base our main activities in it. We need it because we live in a country that is full of conflicts and we live under a very hard occupation by Israel, where people lost trust in other faith groups because of the occupation.

**3. Please briefly describe the main activities or programs your CC is carrying out this year?**

- Environmental activities [www.urenv.net](http://www.urenv.net)
- Youth/intercultural activities [www.vfpeace.org](http://www.vfpeace.org)
- Tourism activities [www.visithebron.ps](http://www.visithebron.ps)
- Non-violence and Peace Education [www.vfpeace.org](http://www.vfpeace.org)
- International Day of Peace IDP
- Word Interfaith Harmony Week

**4. Between which specific religions or cultures are bridges being built?**

We build bridges between Muslims, Christians, including those in different sects, and Jews.

**5. Please explain the method or strategy that your CC uses to bring together people of different cultures and faiths that would otherwise not interact or cooperate with each other.**

We depend on bringing people from different faith groups together in mutual interest groups; in youth sectors, environmentalism, tourism, and peace building so they can bridge the gap between them.

**6. Given the current context you described, what does your CC hope to achieve (goals)?**

We hope to build a bridge between the different Palestinian faith groups and establish contacts with international organizations.

**7. How do you see your CC's work improving cooperation among people of different traditions?**

We are working out a platform in Palestine to bring people from different faith groups together.

**8. How is the work of your CC helping to prevent religiously inspired violence or transforming conflict? (NOTE: This question is relevant only in areas with violence/open conflict.)**

By bringing people together and creating understanding, you eliminate any cause for violence.

**9. What are some observations or signs you see that relations are improving between people of different faiths/cultures in the area where your CC works?**

The large number of participants in our activities is the best example of such success.

**10. Please share a specific short story about your CC's work that might teach a lesson about interfaith or inspire other CCs.**

In one of the exchange programs I participated in, on the topic of Human rights in the Netherlands, I was accommodated in student dorms. When I arrived to the building, I heard that one of the Jewish students who live in the dorms left her room because she heard a Palestinian is coming there.

**11. How is your CC's work helping to achieve the mission of URI?**

We are helping URI by living the URI PPP's and including URI name and mission in all our activities.

**12. Within your CC, you have members from several different faiths and cultural traditions. How would you describe cooperation among your CC's members? What are the challenges?**

We live together in beautiful harmony and we have never encountered any problem.

**13. How is being part of URI helping your CC to achieve its goals?**

We are being helped by being part of a network, living URI PPPs, and learning from the experiences of other CCs.

**14. Aside from funding, what are some specific ways URI can better support your CC in reaching its goals?**

Job shadowing, exchange experience, learning from URI partners, and networking are all very important for us.