


PROGRAM REPORT

North Africa Program, 2017-2018

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CORDOBA FOUNDATION OF GENEVA
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North Africa Program, 2017-2018

The North Africa Program is jointly developed with the 'Religion-Politics-Conflict' Bureau of the Human Security Division (HSD) of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). This program worked to alleviate the polarizations and tensions existing at the intersection of religion and politics and / or involving political actors with religious references. Inclusive, participatory and peaceful societies in the region are the overall goal of this program. Its objectives are 1) to reduce tensions between Islamists and secularists, 2) to reduce the factors leading to the political exclusion of religiously inspired actors, and 3) to respond to violent religious discourses with alternative discourses and practices.

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I. Executive Summary

From June 2017 to September 2018, the Cordoba Foundation of Geneva (CFG) carried out four mediation tracks addressing tensions between actors with different ideologies in the North Africa region, particularly in Morocco and Tunisia. The North Africa Program's goal was to support possibilities for a broader, more inclusive representation of different constituencies in the public sphere, specifically for actors with different worldviews (like exclusive Secularists and Islamists), which contributed to the CFG's vision of inclusive, participative and peaceful societies in the region.

These activities took part in the third phase of a process of conflict transformation initiated in 2011 and funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The first phase of the Program, **North Africa and West Asia in Transformation (2011-2015)**, reinforced “locally owned” capacity and mechanisms to transform violent and potentially violent conflicts at the intersection of religion and politics in the wake of the so-called Arab Spring. The CFG's approach to peacebuilding in this region differed from other activities because it focused on engaging the representatives of so-called “difficult actors” in the MENA region, like Salafis (Orthodox Muslim). This Program was motivated by the analysis that marginalised constituencies could resort to violence if they were not properly equipped with the knowledge and skills to proactively engage in the political transitions towards democratic states. The second phase of the Program, **Secularity (2015-2017)**, built on the CFG's experiences and networks to initiate a first ever mediation between religiously-inspired and secular political actors and opinion-makers. The aim of this process was to alleviate the apparent tensions between Islamists and Seculars in North Africa through open communication, thereby identifying and addressing the factors which lead to the exclusion of some groups from political processes and identifying practical ways to develop an inclusive approach to political participation in North Africa. This Program resulted in a set of recommendations for further mediation work in Morocco and Tunisia, which was put into practice in the third phase of the **North Africa Program (2017-2018)**.

In Tunisia, our aim has been to achieve consensus on the “rules of the game” for a common civic space that includes actors who are frequently excluded from politics, with the aim of preventing recourse to political violence. The CFG facilitated a Track 1.5 and a Track 2 mediation, resulting in successful jointly-implemented initiatives to alleviate political exclusion of diverse actors including young people and representatives of Orthodox Muslim constituencies. One outcome was the joint development of initiatives to promote inclusive civic and political participation of Tunisian youth, across regional and political affiliations between July and September 2018. Another outcome was the production of a project proposal for a safe mediation space to facilitate dialogue on political inclusivity of all actors, which will specifically address government policies and their impact on the Salafi community.

In Morocco, we have carried out a Track 3 mediation process to alleviate ideologically-motivated violence between and among university students with Islamist, Secularist and identity-based references, which affects university campuses throughout the country. During this process, students from diverse ideological backgrounds developed trust in the “other”, leading to greater empathy for different viewpoints and more willingness to self-critique. Moreover, one participant undertook a mediation initiative between Amazigh, Sahrawi and Islamist students' groups in Marrakesh, while another student leader publicly urged for the need to open a discussion between all student groups, irrespective of ideological affiliations. A second track in Morocco has provided support to the Committee of the Civil

Space, which worked on women’s issues in the Secularity phase (2015-2017). Committee members worked together on different issues of common interest and for extending the benefit of their experience further within Moroccan society. Between June and September 2018, Committee members successfully organised a series of workshops for young Moroccans on subjects related to peaceful coexistence in the local context, delivered by experts with diverse ideological affiliations



II. Tunisia: Activities and Results



Ansicht von Kairaouan, Paul Klee (1914)

The national political agenda in Tunisia is still dominated by political issues that reflect the ideological divisions between different parties and blocs, seven years after the transition away from authoritarian government. These include 1) internal regional development and national economic progress, 2) personal freedoms and gender equality, 3) the identity of the state and the legitimacy of religiously-inspired political tendencies, and 4) the fate of returnees from conflict zones.

The objective of this project was to *facilitate the adherence to a consensual framework on the country's governance among political and civil society actors of different world views*. To address this objective, three workshops were organised to promote a shared understanding of controversial issues by opening and encouraging communication channels between opposing groups.

The outcomes of this process were two practical initiatives between ideologically distinct actors. One initiative was the development mediation process between government, ministry and religious figures and representatives of the Tunisian Salafi constituencies. The second was a joint initiative by youth from political and civil society to promote positive youth participation in public affairs and peaceful coexistence across ideological and regional divides. A publication by Salaheddine Jouchi entitled [Lessons Learned from the Experiences of Dialogue and Collaborative Work between Islamist and Secularists in Tunisia](#) also reflected on the lessons learned from the CFG-facilitated mediations between political actors with different and is available in Arabic and English.

Workshop I: Evaluation of the Nidaa Tounes/Ennahdha Alliance, 23 Sep. 2017

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Workshop I 23 Sep. 2017</p>	<p>A joint analysis of the political coalition in Tunisia was carried out between actors from different & conflicting ideologies.</p>	<p>20 participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 political parties & civil society • Islamist (including Salafi) & Secular orientations • 3 youth political party members

Background: This workshop continued a mediation process that began with meetings in March and May 2017, in Tunis, the first of which was dedicated to [a dialogue between Islamist and Secular political actors in the Tunisian context](#) and the second to a [joint evaluation of the Troika government](#). The September 2017 workshop aimed to evaluate [the alliance between](#)



Barzakh Association

[the Nidaa Tounes \(Secular\) party and the Ennahdha Movement \(Islamist\)](#) since 2014, as an example of consensus-building between actors of different ideological backgrounds, to promote joint action, and to protect the process of democratic transition in Tunisia.

Attendance: This workshop was attended by representatives of Nidaa Tounes and Ennahdha; party leaders from Machrouu Tounes, Al Hirak, Forum for Labour and Liberties, Al-Binaa, the Islamic Front; several independents and university researchers and young people from Ennahdha and Nidaa Tounes. Participants identified and discussed four issues:

1. The dominant political force of the Nidaa-Ennahdha coalition;
2. The political role of the General Union of Tunisian Workers;
3. The nature of the presidential-parliamentary hybrid political system;
4. The absence of consensus on the urgency of local elections.

This workshop allowed for the identification of potential entry points for joint actions in favour of the overall aim of facilitating adherence to a consensual framework on the country's governance among political and civil society actors of different world views.

Results: This meeting between political actors sustained the main objective of the North Africa Program:

- ✓ It helped identify potential entry points for joint actions to build a consensual framework for governance among political and civil society actors of different world views;
- ✓ It facilitated a process of dialogue between political leaders with different ideologies;
- ✓ It created a safe space to foster consensus and jointly-developed solutions between Islamists and Secularists;
- ✓ It promoted peaceful coexistence and support for the democratic transition in Tunisia;
- ✓ It examined the practicalities of the joint initiatives launched by both parties;
- ✓ It allowed for joint analysis of whether economic rapprochement was becoming an important part of the process of nation-building because it prioritised political choices over ideological values, and the best interests of the nation over limited partisan interests.

*Workshop II: Evolution of the Salafi Phenomenon in Tunisia: Reality and Future,
7-8 Mar. 2018*

Activity	Progress	Data
Workshop II 7-8 Mar. 2018	Tunisian experts in religious affairs (from different ideological backgrounds) & representatives of the Salafi community discussed & jointly analysed the Salafi trend and its future.	25 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zeitouna University • Ministry of Religious Affairs • Salafi communities • Civil society & political actors



Wikipedia

Background: This workshop was the continuation of a process that began under the Secularity of the North Africa Program. In February 2017, the CFG issued a call for papers on the evolution of the Salafi movement in Tunisia, noting in the advert that mainstream discourses have tended towards generalisations about this heterogenous regional current. For example, the conflation of Salafism, extremism and terrorism has led to a rigid security approach towards this Tunisian constituency, perpetuating their marginalisation during a critical process of political transition. The CFG engaged three Tunisian researchers to present their findings on the subject, representing a diversity of opinions on the development of this phenomena, from the perspective of a Secular researcher, a researcher from the Salafi community and a sociologist. These papers explored the identity, development and possible future of the components of the Tunisian Salafi community, presenting recommendations for state and religious institutions, as well as for Salafi parties and communities. The 7-8 March 2018 workshop aimed to alleviate political tensions and exclusionary political policies in Tunisia by facilitating a joint analysis [of the evolution of the Salafi movement in the national context](#), based on the three research papers.

Attendance: The workshop brought together 25 representatives of political parties, religious, state and academic institutions, and from the Salafi current, in a safe space to 1) present and discuss the three research papers, 2) to jointly analyse the Tunisian religious sphere, specifically the Salafi community, and 3) to define broadly-acceptable policies and next steps for an inclusive political space. Participants in this event were proactive and engaged positively with others, demonstrating the importance of this subject in Tunisia and the need for a safe, shared space for discussion between different opinion-makers. Discussions reflected the complexity of the Salafi movement in Tunisia, and the need for more work towards a shared understanding of it, with the aim of shaping a more inclusive political space for the engagement of Salafi actors.

Results: This workshop successfully contributed to achieving the project’s main objective to facilitate adherence to a consensual framework on the country’s governance among political and civil society actors of different worldviews. It concluded with an agreement to hold a consultation between figures of the religious and state institutions and representative figures of the Salafi community for a dialogue on the management of the national religious sphere and the diversity of its components.

Workshop III: Strengthening the Political Participation and Civic Engagement of Tunisian Youth, 9 Mar. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Workshop III 9 Mar. 2018</p>	<p>First meeting between diverse young actors to discuss current political context & their role within it, contributing to developing shared understanding.</p>	<p>23 participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 political parties • 3 unions • 2 social movements • 9 CSOs • Islamist (incl. Salafi) & Secular (incl. radical Left)



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Background: During the September 2017 workshop, young members of Islamist and Secularist political parties recommended the initiation of a dialogue process on the political and civic role of young Tunisians.

Attendance: The 9 March 2018 workshop brought together 23 young representatives of ideologically diverse political parties, civil society organisations from Tunis and other regions of the country, prominent youth-led social movements and student unions, with the aims of (1) giving young

actors involved in public life an opportunity to meet the “other”, (2) sharing perspectives on youth roles

in safeguarding the political transition, and (3) developing joint initiatives to promote young people’s civic engagement and participation in the May 2018 municipal elections. Many participants noted that this was the first occasion for an encounter between such a diversity of young actors to discuss the current political context and their roles within it.

Results: Despite the ideological tensions that exist between many of the groups represented in this workshop, participants engaged in a constructive dialogue on the problems facing young people in Tunisia today and succeeded in jointly developing comprehensive concrete initiatives to address the multiple and overlapping problems of ideological, generational, economic and regional disparities that impact youth engagement in political and civic actions. The workshop concluded with two original proposals for developing a representative and inclusive core group of ‘youth ambassadors’ from a range of organisations and parties and FM radios, with the mandate of giving trainings to youth associations and party cadres on topics at the core of political participation, local municipal government and negotiation, in towns including Sfax, Kasserine, Manouba, Seliana, Kairaouan, Ben Arous and Gabes.

Concrete Initiatives: “My Municipality is Close to Me” and “Space Tunis”, Jul. – Sep. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
Concrete Initiatives Jul.-Sep. 2018	Two locally-developed & -led initiatives: “Space Tunis” & “My municipality is close to me” to encourage youth political & civic engagement in local affairs.	7 organisations in total, covering activities in Ettadhamon, Tunis; Ain Drahem, Jendouba; Menzel Bourguiba, Binzerte; and Hajeb El Ain, Kairaouan regions.

Background: As an outcome of the 9 March 2018 workshop, two initiatives entitled “Space Tunis” and “My Municipality is Close to Me” were developed and launched with the objectives:

1. To contribute to the promotion of a direct commitment to decentralization and local development in targeted regions;
2. To sensitise young people and other stakeholders to the importance of action in municipalities in the context of decentralization;
3. To encourage youth participation in local affairs;
4. To promote the role of local youth media (web radios, active Facebook pages, etc.).

Results: Between July and September 2018, both initiatives carried out concrete and varied activities in several Tunisian municipalities.



“My Municipality is Close to Me” – coordinated by We Can Foundation (Binzerte) in partnership with Dream FM (Kairaouan) and the National Organisation for Tunisian Children (Tunis) – aimed to build a better understanding of the rights and responsibilities of young citizens at the municipal level. This aim was achieved through a series of workshops in Tunis, Hajeb Layoune and Menzel

Bourguiba, that brought together young civil society and political activists with newly-elected municipal councillors, to jointly learn about the possibilities for effecting change within the local community. A Tunisian expert in decentralisation (also a member of the Tunisian Observatory for the Democratic Transition) provided the training on this subject in Tunisian dialect. These activities were diffused to a broad audience via short video clips disseminated on the social media platforms of the participating organisations, articles published on online blogs and newspapers, and through radio interviews. Dream FM developed sound bites encouraging young people in the Kairaouan area to engage in their local affairs, to vote, to make their voices heard.



“Space Tunis” – coordinated by Barzakh Association (Tunis) in collaboration with Rawafedh Association (Tunis), Ashbal Khmir and Junior Chambers International (Jendouba) – aimed to build the capacity of young people to engage in political and civic action through arts-based advocacy. In August, Ashbal Khmir and Junior Chambers International organised activities for a summer festival in Ain Drahem, developing an awareness-raising video on the importance of young peoples’ participation in the local affairs of the community and of their

responsibility towards their municipality. This video was made in Tunisian dialect and using a traditional style of poetry that resonates with local culture. In early September, members of the Rawafedh Association travelled to Jendouba to meet with Ashbal Khmir and Junior Chambers International, to explore the local area and to jointly learn about the use of film and other art forms in political and civic advocacy. Groups of participants made short videos about civic engagement and joint action, to be disseminated on social media platforms. These activities were diffused to a broad audience via the video clips shared at the Ain Drahem festival and on the social media platforms of the participating organisations.

Workshop IV: Lessons Learned from Political Participation and Civic Engagement of Tunisian Youth, 23 Sep. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Workshop IV 23 Sep. 2018</p>	<p>Successfully convened representatives from each organization involved in the concrete initiatives to present their activities & discuss “lessons learned” from working with actors of different ideologies & regions.</p>	<p>25 participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14/11 male-female representation • 9 CSOs (including 1 FM radio) • 4 regions • 2 municipal councillors • 1 parliamentary deputy

Background: At the end of the “Space Tunis” and “My Municipality is Close to Me” initiatives, a one-day workshop brought together representatives from each organization involved in the activities to share their activities with the other group and discuss “lessons learned” from working with actors of different ideologies and regions.

Attendance: In total, 25 people attended this workshop, including 14 male and 11 female participants. Nine civil society organisations were represented, each with different ideologies and from different regions, including Tunis (Ettadhamon), Jendouba (Ain Drahem), and Kairaouan (Hajeb Layoune). Two municipal councillors (Menzel Bourguiba and Joumban municipalities) also attended, as well as a parliamentary deputy from Ennahdha bloc. The coordinators of each initiative presented the background, methodology and activities of its work in different parts of Tunisia, then all participants discussed the strengths and weaknesses of these experiences of collaboration. It was demonstrated that the initiatives held a great deal of value as a political experience and encouraged young people to appreciate their potential role in actions to support their community.

Results: The “lessons learned” workshop demonstrated that the “Space Tunis” and “My Municipality is Close to Me” initiatives successfully contributed to the North Africa Program objective to facilitate adherence to a consensual framework on the country’s governance among political and civil society actors of different world views, at the municipal level. Through the joint training activities of “My Municipality is Close to Me”, civil society activists from diverse municipalities and their newly-elected councillors developed greater understanding of their rights and responsibilities, as well as a



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more inclusive discourse on the local priorities. The activities of “Space Tunis” gave participants a new language for expressing their political needs, through encouraging local pride and by defining local culture as a capital to be used in promoting local development. Both initiatives expressed their interest in continuing their activities, demonstrating the sustainability of the project and a genuine will to promote positive youth political participation and civic engagement across ideologies and regions.

I believe that the CFG is a serious institution that enjoys credibility and a wide and diverse network of contacts, thanks to its non-discriminatory approach to all parties. It has remained impartial in the many complex conflicts and tensions experienced by most Arab and Muslim-majority countries.

Salaheddine Jourchi: Writer and journalist, founding Tunisian political and civil society



The CFG's importance lies in its ongoing endeavours to resolve the conflicts that beset many peoples. Many of these conflicts are complex, chronic and sometimes costly, yet the Foundation strives to disentangle them and move towards a solution. It relies on a methodology that is simple and challenging at the same time. First, it seeks to gather opposing groups, by necessity, reassuring some of them. It invites them to a serious dialogue, away from the limelight, gradually pushing them to jointly discover their commonalities and to identify their fundamental differences. From that point begin the confidence-building efforts among the parties to the conflict.

III. Violence in Moroccan Universities: Activities and Results



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In Morocco, the implementation period from 2017 to 2018 has been marked by serious, sometimes violent, tensions between citizens and the state and between university students. The main line of fracture within the university space is drawn between the religious and secularist political orientations. These two ideological currents remain the most important from the point of view of the groups' memberships, especially when their non-activist sympathizers are considered. Therefore, the polarisation and tension in politics among actors with different worldviews is reflected in Moroccan society and particularly on university campuses.

The objective of this project was to ***provide support to students and political actors with different inspirations and references, including Islamist and leftist student unions, to establish collaborative ways of reducing violence on university campuses.*** To address this objective, three training workshops were convened in December 2017, April and September 2018, promoting shared understanding of the conflict between Moroccan university students and opening and encouraging communication channels between opposing ideological groups.

These workshops successfully provided training in conflict transformation methodologies, providing capacity-building to representatives of political university factions to engage in violence prevention and peace promotion – both in the university space and outside. Some participants engaged in peace promotion activities during this mediation process, treating ideological conflicts between different groups or encouraging members of the same group to open dialogue with the “other”. A publication by Kheira Tarif entitled [Violence in Moroccan Universities: A problem worth addressing](#) summarised the main findings of the mediation process and reflected on possible solutions to the ideologically-motivated violence in Moroccan universities.

*Workshop I: Promoting Mutual Understanding between Religious and Secular
Currents in Morocco, 16-17 Dec. 2017*

Activity	Progress	Data
Workshop I 16-17 Dec. 2017	First opportunity for Moroccan university students from different political affiliations & ideologies to dialogue & exchange experiences & ideas in a safe space within the country.	20 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 representation of gender • 50/50 representation of Islamist/Secular • 1 local expert, civil society actor • 1 researcher in violence & youth in Morocco

Background: In the Secularity phase of the North Africa Program, a workshop on the topic of Contributing to the Reduction of Violence in Moroccan University Campuses, was organised from 18-19 March 2017. It was the first opportunity to explore possibilities for rapprochement between student factions with differing ideologies and worldviews, based on the recommendations of Moroccan experts and political actors who took part in the Secularity process. Participants in the March 2017 workshop recommended actions towards practical initiatives, including the formation of an Early Warning Early Response mechanism and the instalment of open communication between different student factions.



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Attendance: The training workshop from 16-17 December 2017 brought together 20 Islamist and Leftist student representatives from different groups in a safe space, with 50/50 representation both in terms of

Islamist-Leftist affiliation and gender. This workshop successfully contributed to the objectives of 1) sensitizing representatives of student groups to the concepts of, and approaches to, conflict transformation, and 2) facilitating joint identification of the first steps for a collaborative project.

Training: The training component of this workshop included:

- ✓ Three theoretical sessions with presentations made by the CFG team in:
 - Conflict transformation concepts;
 - Conflict analysis tools;
 - Approaches to conflict transformation;
 - Early Warning Early Response mechanisms.
- ✓ Theoretical input was put into practice during a further three sessions:
 - Group exercises in conflict analysis;
 - Negotiation role play in pairs;
 - Mediation role play in groups of three.



One session featured short presentations by two ‘elders’ (former student activists and leaders) and a discussion on experiences of attempted rapprochement and mediation between Islamists and Leftists in Moroccan universities in the 1980s and 1990s. An Islamist ‘elder’ presented an initiative of a student charter published in 1992 and another leftist ‘elder’ elucidated on the origins of the extreme left student group, Barnamaj Al Marhali, in the context of a narrowed space for political action and a government crackdown on more moderate Leftist actors.



Results: This workshop was an opportunity for students to exchange experiences of ideological-based violence in Moroccan university campuses, using the newly-acquired conflict transformation concepts, approaches, and role plays. Participants confirmed that the training and conflict transformation exercises helped them to better reflect on their past experiences, and on what to improve in future. The sessions featured wide-ranging and constructive interventions from student activists on more recent experiences of tensions and violence in university campuses. Notably, one Leftist student noted that violence has become an integral part of the logic and identity of some university groups, moving beyond a perceived tool for advancing a political project. The atmosphere of the training workshop was one of proactive engagement and positive encounters between participants, demonstrating an eagerness to make the most of this shared space for exchanging ideas, discussing challenges and establishing actions. On numerous occasions, both during open discussions and in conversation with the CFG team, participants highlighted that this was the first opportunity for Moroccan university students from different political affiliations to dialogue in a safe space.

Workshop II: Training to Contribute to the Mitigation of Violence in Moroccan Universities, 21-22 Apr. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Workshop II 21-22 Apr. 2018</p>	<p>Succeeded in reconvening core group of students, delivering joint, context-appropriate & conflict-sensitive training & contributing to promoting a change in conversations among participants.</p>	<p>18 participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 representation of gender • 50/50 representation of Islamist/Secular • 1 local expert and human rights lawyer • 1 foreign expert, former president of UK students’ union

Attendance: This [training workshop in April 2018](#) continued capacity-building for the same group of Moroccan university students from diverse ideological trends, bringing together 18 participants, including two experts with experiences of ideological and political tensions between young people, who were invited to give presentations during the opening session of the workshop. One expert was a law faculty professor, human rights lawyer and former adviser to the Minister for Human Rights, from Morocco and the other was a former President of the National Union of Students in the United Kingdom.

Training: This training was designed to answer participants' recommendations in the December 2017 workshop for further training in the practical application of negotiation and mediation:

- ✓ Introductory session on peaceful coexistence and the management of differences, with presentations delivered by the two experts;
- ✓ Introduction to multi-party mediation;
- ✓ Introduction to mediation process design;
- ✓ An extended multi-party mediation role-play.



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These presentations were followed by lively question/discussion sessions, during which the CFG team also asked participants to share their own experiences of mediation since the December 2017 workshop. This allowed participants to analyse their experiences within the framework of a theoretical approach to conflict transformation, therefore the discussions around these presentations encouraged participants to jointly evaluate mediations between different ideological groups.

Results: The atmosphere of this workshop demonstrated that participants felt increasingly confident to express themselves, to exchange ideas and to share experiences within a safe space. Participants' written, and verbal

Participant feedback during the September 2018 workshop:

These workshops were unprecedented in Morocco and its importance will be better understood by those who know the arena and the reality of students. We have not, in our history – and I have been in university since 2007 – we have not sat down as student factions to discuss the university. It is possible that we met in some social movements or in political movements, but we did not sit down as students to discuss the university space until these workshops. I think it is unprecedented and must continue. Its continuity would have consequences in both the near and distant future because these student activists and leaders are destined tomorrow's political leaders, who will either choose violence and perpetuate divisions or they will stop the violence to build a state that is democratic and just.

Workshop III: Conflict Transformation Training: Early Warning and Early Response Mechanisms, 15-16 Sep. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
Workshop III 15-16 Sep. 2018	Succeeded in reconvening core group of students, delivering joint, context-appropriate & conflict-sensitive training & contributing to promoting a change in conversations among participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50/50 representation of gender • 50/50 representation of Islamist/Secular

Attendance: This training brought together 17 participants in total, which 13 of the same participants that took part in the December 2017 and April 2018 workshops. Two new participants were invited to replace those who could not attend, and the leader of Adl wal Ihsane’s youth wing attended a workshop session about pluralism in students’ action.

Training: This workshop continued the training of this group of students in Early Warning, Early Response mechanisms, equipping them with the theoretical knowledge to establish a context-appropriate approach to alleviating and preventing violence in universities campuses. One session was dedicated to defining the positions, interests and needs of different groups active in Moroccan universities, where diverse participants were evidently comfortable in working together in the tricky exercise of placing themselves in the shoes of the “other”, demonstrating the level of trust and empathy that developed throughout the three safe mediation spaces.

Results: The group displayed an improved working dynamic and greater confidence, with increasingly positive and frank engagement in discussions and exercises. It was observed that the group had come a long way in developing trust and confidence with members of other ideological currents. Outside of the workshop sessions, it was noted that Islamist and Leftist students from different groups mixed very comfortably, which was not the case in the first meetings. During sessions, participants’ interventions were increasingly frank as to the problems facing the university student population and organisers noted that the students had developed more cohesion in their discourses on the issue. One Leftist participant noted that she was impressed with the Islamist students’ increased capacity to critique their own political positions, which she attributed to the CFG’s mediation process.

IV. Morocco Common Civic Space: Activities and Results



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Morocco is well-known for its relatively advanced legislation on women’s rights, however the impact of these laws on social realities is limited. Work between Secular and Islamist stakeholders in advocacy for Moroccan women, continues to be important for promoting a peaceful and inclusive society and polity.

The objective of this project was to ***strengthen the establishment of a coalition of secular and Islamist figures engaged for an inclusive society to jointly undertake sensitization activities related to promoting an inclusive and participative society.***

Between 2016 and 2017, the CFG facilitated a [process of mediation between Secular and Islamist feminist actors and others, about the situation of women in Morocco](#). The participants agreed on working together on themes related to broader problems such as the deficit of democratic values, of ethics in the public space, and of dialogue among different parts of society, in a second phase of the process. Therefore, from June 2017, it was agreed that local ownership of the initiative would be promoted, as the lead would be transferred from the CFG to a local leading committee, with the Foundation continuing to act as facilitator. Since then, CFG maintained communication with members of the leading committee of six members. The committee agreed to launch and jointly-ratify a charter describing the values and identity of the “Common Civic Space” for shared actions by ideologically diverse actors. The charter was finalised in January 2018, and a launch event for this document was held on 28 April 2018.

Charter of the Civic Space: 5 Jan. 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Charter of the Civic Space</p>	<p>Successfully drafted & shared a charter for the Civil Space, as an inclusive & participative space for joint action between actors with different world views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter includes background (“Feminism” initiative), identity of the Civil Space, its goals & objectives

The “Committee of the Civic Space” members agreed to draft a joint charter, to be shared with the wider group by email for written comments and ratification. It presented the spirit of Secularity Processes’ “Feminism” project: to promote joint action by actors of different world views for the common good. The Charter includes the background and identity of the Feminism initiative, its goals and objectives. To disseminate this charter more widely in Morocco, it was also agreed to hold a conference to present this charter to various representative stakeholders, thereby widening the mediation space of this initiative.

Results: The [Charter of the Civic Space](#) constitutes a written record of the mediation group’s consensus-building achievements, and highlights the context of this ideological dialogue, the group’s identity, the aims and objectives of the group’s work, its relationship with the secretariat (Mada Centre), and its membership modalities. It was agreed between participants that a conference would be organised to formally launch the charter, and to disseminate it more broadly.

Personally, I had the opportunity to cooperate with the Foundation as part of a project to mediate and transform conflicts between different parties on the topic of women’s issues in Morocco. The experience was very important and proved that sitting at the same table with another party, and correcting prejudices and misunderstandings, is not impossible. The project overcame a great challenge by encouraging different parties to sit together and exchange views, sometimes expressing a prior misunderstanding of the other's position; especially parties that no one could imagine sitting around a table discussing a very sensitive topic like women's rights (e.g. a secular party and a party with a Salafi orientation).

Merieme Yafout, Doctor in political science and researcher, Morocco



The ambition of the project that we accomplished was very great. It aimed to move towards convincing the various parties to work on a field project for the benefit of Moroccan women. Working together would provide a greater opportunity to understand “the other” and guide everyone's thinking towards the common good of women and the country. Regrettably, this goal could not be achieved because of many political and ideological obstacles. But this does not detract from the great work done by the CFG. And I wish the Foundation a successful journey.

Conference, Launch of the Charter of the Civic Space: 28 April 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Conference 28 Apr. 2018</p>	<p>Successfully organised a 1-day conference for launching & promoting the charter & developing plans for further initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 participants • 4 women & 3 men • 2 Secular & 5 Islamist

A launch event for the Charter of the Civic Space was held on 28 April 2018. This event was planned to ‘reconvene’ the mediation group, to regenerate the dynamic that had existed between members of the group in the previous phase, and to discuss possibilities for establishing concrete actions to carry on the work of the mediation process.



Mada Centre

Results: The 28 April conference was a day-long event divided into two sessions. The first session was organised to include presentations

by five experts/researchers from different ideological backgrounds. These included three members of the mediation space (Mohamed Abdelwahab Rafiqi - absent, Hamad Qabbaj and Khadidja Sabbar) and two new participants (Boubeker Ouankhari and Osama Elzekari). These interventions focused on elucidating the possibilities for a shared civic space for joint actions between religious-based and secular-based actors, from a variety of backgrounds. For example, Khadidja Sabbar presented the development of the civil state in the context of European political philosophy throughout the 19th and 20th centuries; and Hamad Qabbaj presented a perspective of the development of political science in the Islamic context, demonstrating examples of integration and distinction between religious and worldly

affairs. These presentations were followed by an open discussion between the conference participants about the interaction between religion and politics in the public space and follow-up questions for the presenters



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The second session of this conference was convened to read and discuss the Charter of the Civil Space, as well as to brainstorm on possibilities for putting in place concrete joint initiatives, with the support of the committee members.

Concrete Initiatives: July - September 2018

Activity	Progress	Data
<p>Concrete Initiatives Jul.-Sep. 2018</p>	<p>A series of workshops for young Moroccans with different worldviews, providing space for joint learning & dialogue on subjects linked to peaceful coexistence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 230 participants took part in 15 workshops

Background: Following four workshops that took place between 2016 and 2017, and the conference in April 2018, the Civil Space Committee decided to implement a series of workshops to promote understanding between the religious and secular ideological currents in Morocco. The aim of these workshops was to bring together actors with different visions of the world for an open, creative and fertile dialogue on topics related to peaceful coexistence in the Moroccan context. The secretariat of the Civil Space Committee, the Mada Centre, organised 15 workshops between 23 June 2018 and 14 September 2018.



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Results: The workshop topics included “Culture of coexistence and consolidation of the values of pluralism and acceptance of difference”; “Mechanisms of mediation and conflict resolution”; “Field



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research techniques in the field of civic education”; “Freedom of belief”; “Equality and women's rights”; “Conflict resolution techniques”; “Citizenship” and “Living together and managing difference”. These workshops were facilitated by experts with diverse political and ideological backgrounds and were attended by young Moroccans of university age with different backgrounds, from the Casablanca area. Approximately 230 participants took part in these 15 workshops.