

# **Annual Report Arab Educational Institute**

## **1/9/2016-30/8/2017**

### **Introduction**

AEI hosted four programs each of which deals with a combination of different target groups:

1. Inter-religious (Moslem-Christian) community
2. Youth and children
3. Women and family
4. Cultural tourism.

In each of the programs AEI builds upon the power of bringing people together and communicating their voices and stories.

### **Inter-religious Community Program: Citizenship and Diversity: Christian-Moslem Living Together**

The ongoing project 'Citizenship and Diversity: Christian-Moslem Living Together' is led by the inter-religious community program and implemented in the West Bank in collaboration with the Ministry of Education of the Palestinian National Authority. The project, now running for 18 years, promotes inter-religious living together of Palestinian Moslem and Christian teenager youth at 30 West Bank government and private schools.

During the school year 2016-7, 30 classes held 6 inter-religious school hours to learn about both Islam and Christianity. At the end, some 800 students in the regions Bethlehem and Ramallah contributed an essay, story, piece of drama, interview, poem or a presentation about a research.

The Islamic and Christian Religious Education (RE) teachers, working in couples, made their own inter religious student-centered lesson plans. Teacher workshops were held to discuss a range of methods used in the project: moral dilemmas, oral history, storytelling, Socratic dialogue, and AEI's home-grown approach: Read Reflect Communicate and Act (RRCA).

Sixty guest lectures were given at the schools by lecturers including university professors, school inspectors, and religious personalities. During this year, no less than 1727 students participated in fieldtrips to Moslem and Christian religious places in the West Bank.

For the first time a community campaign was organized called “Telling the school community” about the project.

During a week-long Educational Encounter in spring 2017 held by the Ministry of Education in Bethlehem, the program was presented for the second year as one of the four best educational projects in the Bethlehem district. Among the attendants were a number of top officials from Bethlehem and Ramallah in addition to approximately 500 - 600 teachers, school principals, supervisors as well as representatives of the local community.

The following table shows the main activities of the program:

| <b>Measures</b>  | <b>Activities done</b>   |
|--|--|
| Curriculum Development   | <p>A book with stories of Moslem-Christian living together and cooperation was issued in English and Arabic versions, with drawings. The stories were collected by students about human gestures across religious borders, indicating values of generosity, hospitality and solidarity.</p> <p>A manual in Arabic about RRCA (Read, Reflect, Communicate and Act) was produced.</p> <p>A draft manual was made with guidelines on different student-centered methodologies for Inter-religious education; especially fieldtrips, oral history and interviewing.</p> <p>A video about the educational value of fieldtrips was finalized.</p> <p>Model lessons in Ramallah were filmed in full and kept on 20+ CDs.</p> <p>During teacher workshops a new methodology was introduced: debating.</p> <p>During fieldtrips some filming techniques were explained.</p> |
| Peer visits Religious Education teachers to conduct/ observe model lessons | <p>16 RE/civics school teachers at 8 government schools in Bethlehem paid 8 peer visits to private schools in Bethlehem.</p> <p>In addition, 6 RE school teachers at 3 government schools in Ramallah paid 3 peer visits to private schools in Ramallah.</p> <p>11 model lessons were given and tested by teachers, school principals and supervisors of Ministry of Education. A new and helpful tool of evaluation has been the presentation of filmed model lessons that were discussed during teacher workshops.</p>   |
| Teacher workshops on methodology   | <p>For the Bethlehem school teachers 2 one-day teacher workshops were held about methodology, including a discussion about the new Religious Education curriculum of the Palestinian Authority, and a range of methods to be used in the project: oral history, storytelling, Socratic dialogue, and Read Reflect Communicate and Act.</p> <p>For the Ramallah schools 3 one-day workshops were held, with explanations about the project for the new teachers, stories of change methodology, oral history in RE, organizing model lessons, and learning about life through RE.</p>   |
| 30 classes government and private schools                                  | <p>This was fully implemented: 30 classes x 6 interreligious lessons per semester covered the following subjects:</p>  |

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| <p>(including AEI group) doing 6 inter religious lessons per semester</p>   | <p><i>Two religions</i><br/> Characteristic of the two religions Islam and Christianity<br/> Bible and Quran<br/> Peace and nonviolence in the Bible and Quran<br/> Religion and Monotheism<br/> Monotheism in: Judaism, Christianity and Islam<br/> Justice and equality in the two religions<br/> Freedom and religion<br/> Citizenship and Diversity values in the religions<br/> Relations between civic, religious and national values<br/> Human rights<br/> Ibrahim’s sacrifice story in Quran and Bible.<br/> Do unto others as you would like them to do to you.</p> <p><i>Living together</i><br/> Acts of worship and their effect on the individual and the society.<br/> The meanings of living together and coexistence.<br/> Respecting of the differences<br/> Listening to each other<br/> Christian and Islamic feasts<br/> Christian and Muslim Holy Places and the country’s commitment<br/> Religion and violence in the Middle East</p> <p><i>Special topics, relevant to youth</i><br/> The ongoing civil and inter-denominational conflict in Syria, Iraq and others<br/> Corruption and the position of religion about it.<br/> Participation in the elections: a right and duty for every citizen<br/> How to control the use of social media as young people<br/> Communication and openness between the young people<br/> School education and its role in creating an open and tolerant thinking</p> <p><i>Methods</i><br/> Storytelling in the Bible and Quran<br/> Moral dilemma and its applications.<br/> Socratic dialogue method.</p> |
| <p>One community campaign set up by students, teachers and supportive women groups to promote Moslem – Christian living together.</p> | <p>This first campaign focused on “Telling the school community” about the project. In total some 2350 persons were directly reached, in addition to some thousands of viewers/readers through newspapers, local TV and radio, and social media.</p> <p>During a community gathering at Talitha Kumi in Beit Jala about 100 persons were reached.</p> <p>During a ‘project day’ of the Ministry, the project was explained in front of an audience of 200 teachers.</p> <p>During open days of 18 governments schools in addition to some private schools and school graduation days, more than 1500 persons attended and learnt about the program.</p> <p>9 inter-religious school celebrations showed drama scenes, individual singing, choir performances and storytelling from Bible and Quran. They were attended by students, parents, community figures, teachers and school administrators. The project choir was a particular attraction.</p>   |

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|  | <p>A TV broadcast with an hour-long discussion of the program in the presence of teachers, parents, students and MoE officials) is expected to come on Palestine TV (national TV station) next school year, to be viewed by many thousands.</p> <p>An article in Al Quds national newspaper was read by some 1000s. The Ministry of Education website as well as school websites covered some of the related activities.</p> <p>Several schools created brief moments of publicity about the project through wall posters and morning 'broadcasts' in front of all school students.</p> <p>At some schools, parents were directly informed in teacher-parent meetings about specific project activities such as joint lessons, fieldtrips and guest lectures.</p>                                     |
| <p>Student fieldtrips to Moslem and Christian sites</p>                            | <p>Classes from 30 schools participated in 26 journeys to Moslem and Christian holy places and other sites in the Hebron, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Sebastia/Nablus regions of the West Bank. Many journeys were combined so that rows of buses went in a queue to a central place, after which the buses went each to a destination within the district so as to prevent that one site would have all students at the same time. In total 1727 students participated, including students from the project schools but outside the project classes. Schools were asked to prepare their students in advance for special performances to be conducted on or near the sites around an inter-religious theme. The fieldtrips were made possible by a subsidy of Advent Action from the Netherlands.</p>    |
| <p>Moslem- Christian religious ceremonies one in Bethlehem and one in Ramallah</p> | <p>There was a combined celebration of Christmas/Teacher Day and Human Rights Day on December 15, 2016, in Beit Sahour, with about 200 participants, including teachers, Ministry officials, Moslem and Christian religious personalities, principals, supervisors, student and women choirs, and some parents.</p> <p>On the occasion of Eid Al Fitr (end of Ramadan) and the Resurrection Feast (Easter) more than 250 participants attended these two religious celebrations. The attendants included teachers, principals, students, parents, religious figures, Mayor of Bethlehem and the Ministry of Education officials in Bethlehem and Ramallah.</p> <p>2 Ramallah schools (Lady of Annunciation and St George) held a large Moslem-Christian celebration together, for the first time.</p> |
| <p>Training sessions choir and performances</p>                                    | <p>20 training sessions were given for a girls' choir, which now counts 25 students from different government schools. During the project period they gave 9 public performances at religious celebrations, mainly at schools.</p> <p>Encouraged by the example, one government school in the Bethlehem area established its own girl choir, of over 20 students, under the umbrella of the project.</p> <p>Another school too started a girls' choir, outside the project theme but inspired by the project choir.</p>   |

The overall assessment is positive. The student and teacher methodologies worked. The teachers were positive about joint lessons and peer reviews as methodologies to

improve teaching. The story approach motivates students and helps to spread the project message outside the classes. The new story book was used by some RE teachers, and also by some English teachers at private schools. The increase in variety of student contributions (not only stories and essays, as in the past) was helpful for the educational quality of the project, as felt by the project committee.

The first community campaign was a success in terms of the audiences reached. Especially the school celebrations, sometimes at the occasion of a Moslem or Christian feast, were well-attended. The girls' choir was such an attractive contribution that two more schools started their own choirs.

The fieldtrips were a highlight in the program since not many schools offer fieldtrips due to safety and funding concerns. The informality and entertainment during the trips created positive energy among students, teachers, project staff, Ministry and committee members alike. Importantly, the fieldtrips gave opportunities to the project choir to perform. In some places, such as Hisham's Palace and Mount Gerizim/Samaritan Museum, there were stages which the students and choir could use.

The interreligious and community program was last year made possible by subsidies of: Misereor, Kindermissionswerk, Cafod, Advent Action, Archdiocese Munich, and Solidariteitsfonds.

## Youth Media House

Some 50 youth of different age levels came on weekly base together In the Youth Media House to discuss issues of Palestinian youth life and share projects in arts and nonviolent communication. The youth were challenged in the Youth Media House to develop inner focus by thinking critically, acting creatively, and communicating effectively.

The Youth Media House hosted the following groups for weekly meetings outside the holiday periods:

| <b>Group</b>                        | <b>Age</b> | <b>Main activities</b>   | <b>Size group</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--|-------------------|
| Kids                                | 6-12       | Weekly meetings with crafts and arts, celebrations at religious and national days, drama training.   | 20- 25            |
| Teenagers                           | 12-17      | Weekly training on different topics, celebrations on different social, religious and national occasions, Moslem-Christian living together, BBQs.   | 15 - 20           |
| Students-<br>young<br>professionals | 18-30      | Weekly training on different topics, Neuro-Linguistic Prgramming workshops, celebrations different social, religious and national occasions, BBQs. | 15 - 20           |
| Music group<br>Sawa                 | 14-17      | Training on the different musical instruments, composing lyrics and music, performing in different   | 10                |

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|  | occasions such as Christmas, in meetings with visitor groups and at the Wall. |  |
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The last project concerns the professional development of the Palestinian teenager music group Sawa in Bethlehem. The project's aim was to engage youth in educational activities outside school so as give them experience in life skills and help them raising their voices through music.

The group held 7 performances in the West Bank: 2 performances at AEI Christmas celebrations, an end-of-year performance for AEI's kids and their families, a special performance along the Wall, one during a fieldtrip with school classes in the Nablous region, a performance during AEI's 2017 summer activities, and one at the June event in front of the Wall to commemorate 50 years of occupation (see below). The group participated in an EU sponsored music camp in Germany, July 2017.

The Youth Program also took part in the Citizenship and Diversity program. A student leadership group held 40 meetings about inter-religious living together; conducted 4 one-day fieldtrips to Artas, Bethany, Birzeit and Jericho areas in the West Bank, and pronounced a brief manifesto about Moslem-Christian living together during the June public meeting in Bethlehem.

During the summer, the youth and children program, like last year, developed a two-week activity program for the kids groups as well as groups with teenagers, postgraduates and young professionals in cooperation with the Greek-Catholic school in Beit Sahour. The participants included 90 kids (4-12 years) from the school and AEI kids group, as well as 20 participants from AEI's other youth groups (15-30 year). Two weeks of different activities and workshops were offered by 5 specialist trainers covering the fields of sports, drama, music, modern dance, *dabkah*, and Arts.

With the facilitation of two Dutch Quakers, Sytze and Marlies Tjallingii, some Neuro-Linguistic Programming workshops were given to the teenager and postgraduate groups.

At the end of the year, the Youth Media House was relocated from Madbasseh Street to become a neighbor of AEI's Sumud Story House in North-Bethlehem.

The following organizations supported the program: Friends of Young Bethlehem, Dutch Quakers, Children Stamps, and Association pro Terra Sancta.

### **Sumud Story House**

The Sumud Story House is located near the Bethlehem-Jerusalem checkpoint and the Separation Wall around Rachel's Tomb in north-Bethlehem. Rachel's Tomb is a holy

place annexed to Israel and walled-off, made inaccessible for Palestinians. Initially the Sumud Story House started in response to the building of the Wall in the Rachel's Tomb area in 2003-5.

At the Sumud Story House 3 women groups including a choir came regularly together for their weekly meetings and training sessions dealing with a wide range of social, cultural, psychological and inter-religious topics. The women groups have a mixed Moslem-Christian composition, and focus on community building and developing voices and personal stories on justice and peace.

Since 2008, SSH has been involved in activities on women's rights, women's stories and the international project 'Women and Youth against Violence' – with partners in the Netherlands, Palestine and Iraq. The women of the House linked up with women in the countryside of the Bethlehem area, especially a women's center in the village of Walajeh. This year was the final project year. The participants jointly dialogued with local Palestinian authorities, police, security people as well as Moslem and Christian religious authorities and challenged them to give higher priority to women's rights and security.

The women were creatively involved in nonviolence vis-a-vis the Wall in Bethlehem, such as the further development of a "Wall Museum" with 50 new weather-resistant story posters attached to the Wall.

In overview, the Sumud Story House hosted the following groups:

| <b>Group-background</b>            | <b>Main activities</b>   | <b>Group size</b> |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Experienced women's group          | Meetings and workshops on life skills, communication skills, Moslem-Christian living together, gender relations, parenting, current news | 25                |
| Young women's group                | Meetings on life skills, communication skills, gender relations, Moslem-Christian living together  | 9                 |
| Teacher women's group              | Methodologies of teaching and learning   | 15                |
| Rachel's Tomb area's women's group | Meetings and workshops on life skills, communication skills, Moslem-Christian living together, current news, parenting, gender relations | 20                |
| Women's choir                      | Rehearsals and performances (6 during last school year, mainly in the larger Bethlehem region)   | 20                |

|                                |   |    |
|--------------------------------|---|----|
| Violence against women project | Dialogues with religious leaders and security authorities about gender and human security                         | 27 |
| Family group                   | Monthly meetings on life skills, communication skills, Moslem-Christian living together, gender issues, parenting | 60 |

Note that the ‘violence against women’ group and the choir consist of members from other groups. The family group consists of women from the experienced women’s group who bring their male family members, including spouses.

During September 2016 AEI hosted one week two social counsellors from the Netherlands, Janny van Heerbeek and Geraldien Blokland, who gave several training sessions about parenting for women’s groups at AEI and some other Palestinian organizations.

In October members of AEI’s youth and women groups followed several workshops on Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). The courses were given by Sytse and Marlies Tjallingii, both with a long experience in giving such courses in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and elsewhere. NLP aims to help participants to communicate effectively and to reach goals in life.

In November, volunteers Jean Brant and John Talbot, experienced counselors from the UK, gave some counseling workshops to women and youth.

Kathinka Minzinga, besides coordinator of EAPPI in Holland a former professional music/singing teacher gave a workshop to the Bethlehem Sumud women’s choir, around a Gospel song.

In February, British volunteer Kate Oliver gave the experienced women’s group a session about “art, storytelling and advocacy.”

In several workshops over the year, two volunteer artists, Ada Krowinkel (Netherlands) and Angela Blackwood (UK), facilitated the making of drawings and paintings by youth and women for use in 50 Wall posters at the occasion of 50 years of occupation in June 2017.

At the end of May, German photographer Sibylle Hoffer worked for some days with 4 AEI women to make series of photos about daily life and public events in Bethlehem.

Part of the program was integrated into Citizenship and Diversity project. Ten sessions were conducted with the AEI women’s groups about:

- The meaning of fasting in Christianity and Islam.

- Fasting as a nonviolent resistance approach taking Mahatma Gandhi as an example.
- Peace building and nonviolence and women as peacemakers.
- Preparing and training on interreligious and peace songs for the community campaign and celebrations with the schools.
- Awareness and story collection from Palestinian history about Nakba, Naksa and 50 year of occupation.
- Women's roles in the Bible and Quran, and issues of inter-religious peace and nonviolence.

The following organizations supported the women's and family program: Cordaid and PAX, Children Stamps (workshops parenting), Friends of Young Bethlehem.

### **Visitor and events / cultural tourism program**

All AEI groups – youth, women, family, school communities – helped to prepare and organize the events that are part of AEI's last program: encouraging meetings with visitors, the training of workers in the tourism industry, and organizing community events.

Besides weekly meetings and workshops on non-violent communication and arts work, the women and youth of AEI met some 15 foreign visiting groups interested to learn about daily life in Bethlehem. This year among others groups from Caritas Europe, Germany, and Netherlands were received, especially those who came through Pax Christi.

A new initiative in the year before, 2015-6 was the establishment of a Wall Information Center at the Sumud Story House, staffed by youth and women volunteers. The Center supports the implementation of security council resolution 1325 on women participation and leadership in conflicts and in issues of human security. Though without funding this year, the Wall Information Center continued to work with the development of creative advocacy models, including symbolic actions in front of the Wall in Bethlehem.

The expanded Wall Museum, with its story posters, is the most salient of these creative advocacy actions. This year, 50 new English-language posters were fixed on the Wall as part of the Wall Museum. They give brief background information about the story themes highlighted in previous Wall posters. Each new poster explains a particular dimension of occupation – the many forms of cruel physical and psychological pressure individuals and the Palestinian community as a whole experience, like house demolitions, interrogations, curfews, settler violence, and so on. But in order to show that people are far from only being victims, the posters also describe 50 forms of *sumud* parallel to those 50 expressions of occupation. The definitions of *sumud* were supported by large colored drawings and paintings crafted in the previous months by Palestinian women and youth, facilitated by Dutch and British artists.

AEI collaborated in the summer with Dutch peace organization PAX's activist lab in a brainstorm about designing creative actions around Rachel's Tomb in northern Bethlehem.

### Sumud and Freedom, June 5-6, 2017

"Sumud and Freedom" was the slogan of AEI's Monday June 5 public meeting in commemoration of 50 years of occupation. It took place in front of the Wall in north-Bethlehem. The Wall is a reality and symbol of occupation as well as of the imposed fragmentation of the Palestinian land and its people. A few hundred people, including the mayor of Bethlehem and a visitor group of Pax Christi Germany, participated in a program that extended into the Tuesday when a community *Iftar* [Ramadan evening meal to break the fast] was held in the same place.



Inad Theatre

The Palestinian concept of *sumud*, literally steadfastness or perseverance, emphasizes the connection with the land, the people, the traditional culture. A children's program by 'Inad Theatre from Beit Jala featured hilarious conversations between a grandfather and his grandchild who among other things learned about the healthy effects of eating fresh fruits from land now largely stolen. The women of the Bethlehem Sumud Choir showcased the heritage in their songs and traditional red-embroidered dresses. How to rhythmically connect to the land was shown by a youth *dabkeh* [traditional dance] troupe from the village of Wadi Fouqeen near Bethlehem. The call for freedom was loudly heard in the swinging music of Bethlehem singer George Thalgieh and AEI's youth music group Sawa [together], the last singing the Human Rights Song, "The world should be a fair place, where we can all live in peace..."

Twenty international artists or groups of artists contributed to a rotating digital exhibit displayed on a screen behind the stage. They expressed visions of occupation and freedom. The artists drew abstract forms of shrinking space, brought out the fate of Gaza in sensitive drawings, painted the soul of the Palestinian people, sung the poetry

of a bird on top of the Wall looking both sides, presented the terrible conditions of refugee camps in Greece (one automatically thought of Palestinian refugee camps), sung a Biblically inspired peace message.

Dutch painter Marlies Verda was present at the occasion and told how she, as a visual artist, had been looking for the human faces of her ancestors who perished during the Second World War in Europe, and whom she doesn't know. In a series of self-portraits she recreated those faces yet in a way that all were invited to project their own names and faces and humanity in them: "it may be me, it may be you." Human connection is key.

*AEI would like thank:*

The crowdfunders in Germany and those who organized them, including Johanna and Ida in Germany and the Friends of Young Bethlehem in the Netherlands.

The contributions of international artists: Christine Bader (Germany), Klaus Fezer (Germany), Forschungsgruppe Kunst (Germany), Sibylle Hoffer (Germany), Roger Iredale (England), Ada Krowinkel (Netherlands), Mélina Mauberret (France), Lidy Meier (Netherlands), Christa Nistrath (Germany), Armin W. Nimra-Ruckerbauer (Austria), Gangolf Peitz (Germany), Anke Pfandler-Spiegel (Austria, Germany), Carla Rus (Netherlands), Gudrun Ryssel (Germany), Elena Sofia Stranges (Italy), Unamore (Netherlands), Marlies Verda (Netherlands), Peace Choir, Oisterwijk ca (Netherlands), Thijs Verster (Netherlands), Willem k Vreeswijk (Netherlands).

Volunteer Ida:

It was the first time that AEI tried to crowd-fund that way in Germany. When the funding started I had a lot to do, especially sending out mails asking people to spread the link of the page. But with much help from Pax Christi sections in Germany, we succeeded to spread the page. We came very close to reach our funding goal before the deadline, but in the end we needed a little help from the Friends of Young Bethlehem, the Dutch crowd funding partner, to encourage more people to give at the end and reach the targeted amount. After the deadline we even collected more and finally reached 8000€. I am very happy how it worked out and proud that we got so much support and could also spread the word about the work of AEI.

## **Cultural tourism**

Like previous year, AEI developed together with Nes Ammim's Center of Learning and Dialogue, a 10-day journey for over 20 Dutch visitors organized in February-March, 2016.

Further, AEI prepared a brand-new vocational training for the academic year 2017-8 for supporting job seekers in the local tourism sector, both at offices and in starting up a home-based tourism business. The training will follow a one-year curriculum of four courses of each 80 hours, prepared in the first half year of 2017.

1. Organizing and accompanying day programs for visitors including the setting up of workshops and small events to show Palestinian culture.
2. Oral communication with visitors, including tourism English, and the effective presentation of one's personal, family and community stories.
3. Effective use of Internet and social media in relation to tourism: the appropriate use of Facebook and Twitter, how to update a website and present oneself and one's business/office to international audiences.
4. Basic administrative and communication skills in computer use, handling emails, Word and Excel, and financial administration.

Among the participants will be those who want to start a home-based enterprise in the hospitality industry. They will be coached in finding the right combination of services that help them to communicate their stories to visitors. A cooperative for income-generation was also planned.

The project is supported by the Diozese Stuttgart in Germany and Stichting BVA in the Netherlands.

### **Conferences and visits**

Rania Murra, AEI's director, participated in regional (MENA) women's peace table in Amman, organized by PAX, 17-18 October, 2016

Fadi Abu Akleh visited a Christmas market in south Germany, for 2 weeks, to sell olive wood products as an income generating project for AEI.

In February Roger Salameh and Raida Al-Sheibi participated in an international conference in Panama on inter-religious dialogue organized by the Arigatou Foundation.

In February Roger Salameh participated in a TOT training #Youth4Peace in Holland for one week organized by UNOY about "Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Transformation".

At the University of Galway (Ireland), Rania Murra and Fuad Giacaman participated in workshops to promote non-violence/non-violent resistance.

Rania Murra participated in the Pax Christi International board meeting, Brussels, in April.

On 25/4/2017 Rania Murra opened an exhibit about the Wall Museum in Essen, Germany.

Fadi Abu Akleh participated with the music group Sawa in an EU sponsored music camp in Germany, July.

## Media and publications

*Story book:* As part of the Citizenship and Diversity project, AEI compiled a new book with short stories about Moslem-Christian living together collected and written by students from West Bank schools in the Bethlehem and Ramallah regions. See here the complete 130-page book in PDF:

[http://www.aeicenter.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=288:hand-in-hand-pdf&catid=42](http://www.aeicenter.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=288:hand-in-hand-pdf&catid=42)

*Reporters of daily life:* Members of AEI's women's groups and volunteer Ida made photo series about daily life in Bethlehem together with Sibylle Hofer of Agentur Schwimmer (Germany) who made many of her own as well. Themes: official, city councils, occupation, teen killed, teen's funeral, Christianity, private, agricultural project.

<https://www.agentur-schwimmer.de/content/desks-local/palastine/?L=1%2F%5C%5C%5C%27%2F>

*EAPPI:* At the invitation of the German section of EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Program for Palestine Israel), Fuad Giacaman wrote an article about its recent work, taking the *sumud* concept as a starting point. See *here* for the English as well as German versions.

*Video:* YouTube video about AEI made by Fadi Abou Akleh:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xj6z3VTYIXU> (4 min).

*This Week in Palestine:* In a world often afflicted by a sense of exclusivism between religions, Palestine knows many instances of Muslim-Christian mutual openness and conviviality surrounding religious celebrations. Palestinian students collected stories about such openness during religious celebrations. See this article by AEI staff in the December issue of *This Week in Palestine*, accessible until 31/12/2016:

<http://thisweekinpalestine.com/cross-border-celebrations/>

An issue of *Nocturnal* (UK) on the Wall Museum:

<https://view.joomag.com/nocturnal-issue-v/0330121001479919200?page=54>

*Cross Rhythms* radio (US) interviewed Fuad Giacaman in spring.

AEI supplied photos and stories to *The Rights Forum* for an item about 50 years of occupation.

*Story posters*: Upon request, photos of the new posters were sent to the Palestinian Authority leadership for use at a meeting in the EU.

AEI continued *Facebook pages* about the AEI, the Sumud Story House, Humans of Palestine, and the Wall Museum. It issued 2 newsletters about AEI activities, see for the articles [www.aeicenter.org](http://www.aeicenter.org).

For photos and impressions about the inter-religious school project 'Citizenship and Diversity: Christian-Moslem Living Together', see the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Citizenship-Diversity-Christian-Muslim-Living-Together-in-Palestine-545063149025832/>

## **Volunteers**

AEI hosted volunteers from Germany, India, UK and the Netherlands, for shorter and longer periods. With Pax Christi Stuttgart a cooperation was continued to have annually a volunteer staying at AEI for a full year.