FINAL REPORT FORM
for
WACC-SUPPORTED PROJECT

This document is for end-of-project reporting. It has two parts: a) Narrative Report; b) Financial Report.

You will need to refer to your Project Application Form, the Agreement with WACC, and your bank statement when completing this form. Please return it with supporting documents and materials to WACC. Please answer the questions as fully as possible.

THE NARRATIVE REPORT

1. **Project Title:** (as appeared in the Agreement)	**The Right to Freedom of Speech**
2. **Project Reference Number**: (as appeared in the Agreement)	**1574**
3. **Full Name of Project Holder:**	**World Association for Christian Communication- Middle East**
4. **Full Address:**	**170 Al Alam Street, Khayyat Building, Badaro- Lebanon**
5. **Name of Country**:	**Lebanon, Middle East**
6. **Period the project was implemented:** (from month/year to month/year)	**13.3.2011- 7.7. 2011**
7. **Project Grant received:** **[You must include any bank charges deducted]**	**Amount in local currency:** **$ 19040. Euro 13600** **Amount in Euros or US$ (circle as appropriate):**
8. **Date(s) Project Grant(s) were received:** (as in your bank statement) 1st remittance 2nd remittance	**24.5.2011**

9. Activities

The activities started with the WACC Middle East Committee meeting in Jordan to plan for the event. Following that there were two Encounters for the WACC members in Egypt and Lebanon to reflect on the theme and have feedback from the WACC members and other media activists on the emerging situation of the region, especially Egypt following the revolution.

The major activity was the regional workshop. The workshop was a very fruitful and productive one. First to be mentioned that what was planned was done, thus:

1- Analysis based on a survey of how freedom of expression was oppressed in the Egyptian revolution and the demonstrations in Lebanon.
2- Training workshop for journalists and personnel involved in communication.
3- Case studies were presented on how the Arab satellites have dealt with the events vis a vis (towards) the traditional one.
4- Training session was done on:
   a- "use and power of the social media"
   b- Capacity building of communication rights
   c- Strategies that can help advance freedom of expression and communication rights.

The following is a brief summary of the events:

A workshop on "the role of media in promoting freedom of expression" was held upon the invitation of the World Association of Christian Communication- Middle East (WACC-ME); the aim behind the conference was for association members to discuss possible means for changing the reality of media in the Arab World as well as the opportunities for promoting freedom of expression. In his opening speech, Reverend Riad Jarjour, head of WACC-ME, praised the participation of Arab youth in demonstrations calling for the change of regimes, as well as their use of electronic and social media as means of communication and call for action, which was directly linked with the workshop topics, i.e. the right for expression through the media and particularly new media.

WACC secretary general, Reverend Karin Achlestetter confirmed her support of what the region is going through as well as her readiness to share the experience on the media level. She put the association at the disposal of any possibility to improve the reality, through networking and exchange of similar attempts of media liberation, and considered that what is happening shall be a model to be followed by other countries of the world suffering from similar situations.

Moreover, the timing of the conference was highly important, said Lavinia Moher, since it coincides with rapid developments and radical changes within the Middle East.

All along the three-day workshop, held between the 9th and the 11th of June 2011 in Garden Hotel- Brummana, journalists from Lebanon, Egypt and Syria outlined the reality of freedom of expression in the Arab world. Journalist Jihad EL Zein linked between freedom of expression and democratic and intermitted passing on

of power, considering that Lebanon was not an advanced model since it suffers from an ailing rhythm of practice, and adding that the Iraqi model was unsound.

The Lebanese case was then exposed by lawyer Adel Boutros who though that freedom of expression in the region was unique by not being previously censured, however not absolute because any offense against others shall put off by justice.

Kamal Nabil presented the Egyptian case and shred his personal communication experience through virtual space during the January 25th revolution; he stressed on the role played by social networks, and particularly Twitter, in achieving the objectives of Egyptians and covering the pure reality of the events. He concluded saying that conventional media had no more future.

The Syrian experience was communicated by Dr. Nazha Elias who declared that "shutting mouths" has always gone together with the Arabism journey in Islam. She refused to take her country back to times of "gloominess" under coverage of freedom and change; in fact, she mentioned being against the fall of the Syrian regime by fear of a new government that would repress freedoms, and especially freedom of expression.

Furthermore, journalist George Nassif elaborated a strategy consisting of eight elements to boost freedom of expression in the Arab World, the first of which was the separation between the media and the political power, followed by resistance against the dominance of editors in chief and against the lack of professionalism within journalists. He warned from the "hideous" confusion between media and information amidst media institutions, this was also a topic tackled by journalist Moustafa Fahs who spoke about Arab satellites and warned against any mixture between internal policies and funding policies that might jeopardize the institution's professionalism.

Professor Antoine Msarra highlighted what should be avoided nowadays by the Christian media such as complaints and grievance, as well as the importance to resort to protective laws instead o counting on sectarian protection. He stressed on the necessity to deter any sectarianism in tackling with national and social issues, and called for a Christian media that serves the public interest.

Journalist Saad Kiwan thought that Arab media will need time to prove its changed perception and way of dealing with the news as well as to gain more freedom, especially that media people have become employees, and this requires freedom in official institutions first in addition to rotating powers,

After the sessions, participants listed weaknesses and strengths of the Arab media in general and the Christian media in particular, as well as the many threats facing it against very few opportunities.

10. Was the project successful? (If possible, please give measurable indicators.)

The project was successful, it was a great workshop especially in reflecting on the freedom of expression in the Arab World and it did tackle the matter in light of the Egyptian revolution.

First was the introduction of the social media used in the Egypt revolution. There was good learning, greater awareness, full awareness of people's rights for

communication rights. Participants left the meeting with planned activities. The recommendations were great! We mention the following:

1- Create an international support network for partners, similar to the blue umbrella
    - Create a virtual network
    - Design and implement training and capacity building programs targeting religious leaders, media and civil society organizations.
    - Lead studies and assessments to outline the situation of freedoms and the capacity of change.
    - Elaborate documents and case studies showing success that can be followed
    - Produce guides, books, publications, movies and documentaries.
2- take a census of and disseminate cases of repression of freedoms in various regions
3- Enable youth to use the hide park idea in written or audiovisual media

11. Project Beneficiaries
Direct beneficiaries were:
- Members of the WACC ME in the region: Media house, Telecine International, CEOSS, AL-Bayader Journalistic EST., Kafa (Enough Violence against Women), FMEEC, Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue (FDCD), Sat-7, Tele- Lumiere.
- 8 participants from secular media and television such as Future TV, LBC, New TV, Daily Star, An-Nahar Press, AL-Safir Newspaper, Iraqi TV.

The Indirect beneficiaries were members and people associated with the WACC members and people interested in the media. It worth to mention that Tele-Lumiere TV Lebanon and Sumaria TV Iraq, broadcasted interviews and a bit of the sessions and outcome. Also the press wrote about the workshop.

12. How have the beneficiaries reacted to the programme activities? What were the impacts of the project and different effects on women and men in the project?
The reaction was very positive. The participants missed the Palestinian intervention due to their absence. The impact was great.

13. Outcome and Outputs of the project: What has your project achieved and what has changed?
The good outcome was when the participants went back and promoted communication rights through processing the strategies learned. There were several small productions on the internet for example done by Kamal Sidra in Egypt. Participants did good networking on facebook, etc.
The major output was by activities done by the participants upon their return as a result of the knowledge and skills they learned.

14. Evaluation

Given the short time to prepare for the project, the project was a successful one, as far as outcome-output, and the great awareness of freedom of expression by the participants, their organizations and the media at large.

A great challenge was to have the workshop in a period of uprising in the Arab World. I must admit the failure of a good survey or analysis due to the fact that it did not respond to the participants' expectations. This made the participants analyse the situation, each from their own perspective. Another difficulty was the problem of visa to Palestinian participants, mainly due to tense political times in Lebanon at that time. The positive matter in the\is workshop was the presence of both: the general security of WACC Global and the Liaison with the Middle East. In all, it was a successful project that achieved its objectives.

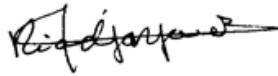**15. Other comments, if any.**

Having the project done by an outgoing WACC Ex-com and a new coming in is a bit problematic! At least half of the committee should stay on for the sake of continuity.

16. Name of the person submitting the report: Riad Jarjour

Position: WACC President till June 2011
Date: January 2012

Signature