



The United Religions Initiative (URI)

in Middle East & North Africa
(MENA) Region

2002 -2010



How URI was born in MENA

In March 2002, a delegation from MENA accepted URI invitation to participate in a URI meeting in Berlin, Germany.

The MENA participants were inspired by the way URI brought the best wisdom of the world's diverse spiritual traditions to guide peace lovers across the globe on their journey to make our world better place for all.



URI is about:

- Appreciating the uniqueness of all traditions.
- Working at a grassroots level.
- Embracing all “everyone is welcome”.
- Hearing the voices that not often heard.
- Sharing wisdom and resources.
- Stopping violence in the name of religion.
- Creating cultures of peace and justice.

“In short; URI is about empowering people and encouraging them to contribute to the world’s efforts of making our world better place for mankind and all living beings”.



This life-changing experience encouraged MENA participants to join URI. As a result, a small URI community of seven URI Cooperation Circles (CCs – URI’s member groups) was created in MENA during the year 2002. In eight years, this community has grown to include 47 CCs, with more than 600 members, from 12 countries across MENA.



URI member groups are engaged in different activities on local, regional and global levels, including peace building, intercultural understanding, civil society building, and environment protection.

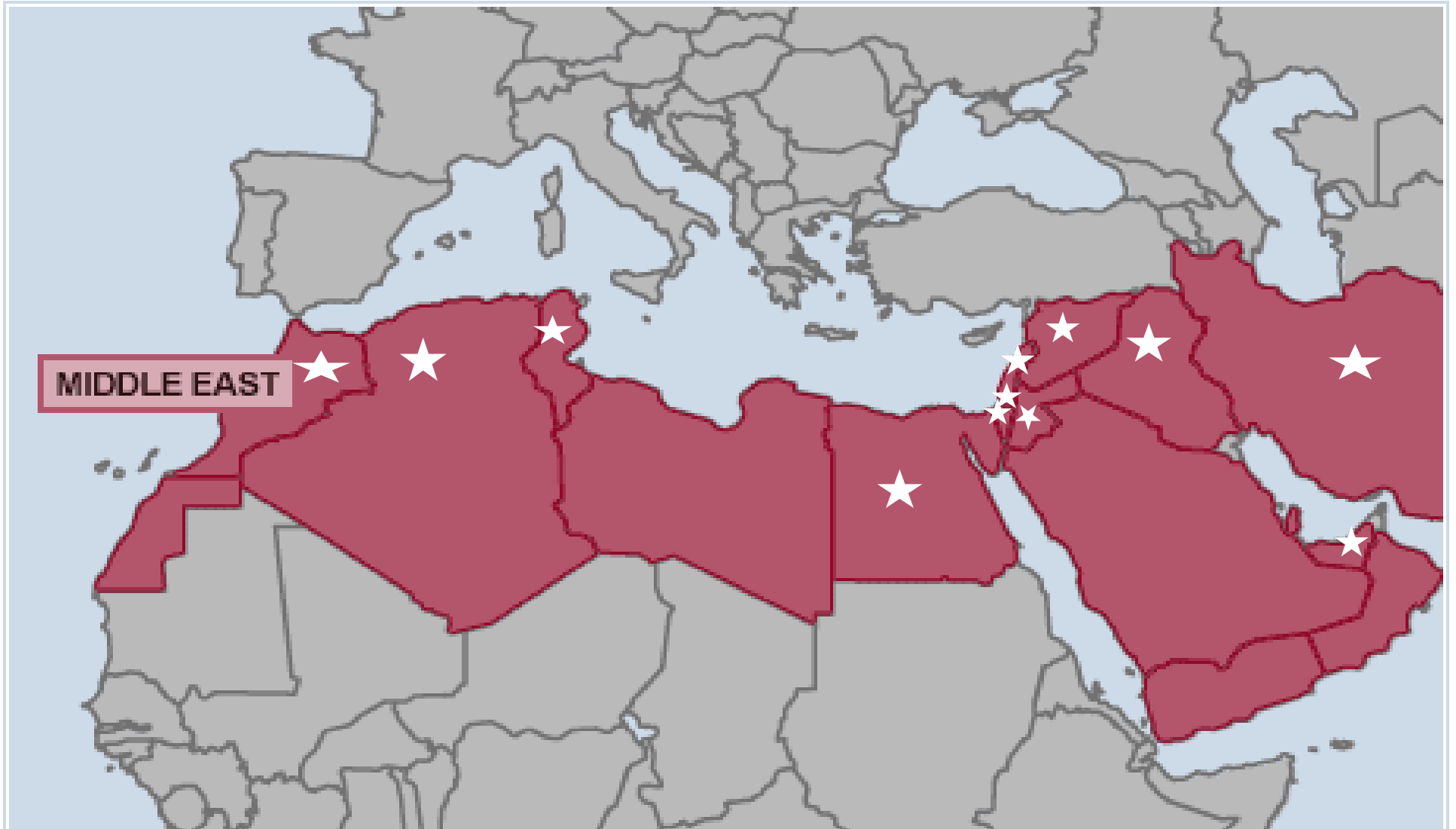
URI in MENA has succeeded in deepening understanding and cooperation among the historic faith communities in MENA as well as empowering youth initiatives to play a vital role in building their societies..



URI Regional office in Amman

- Provide a venue for all MENA CCs, where they can meet, develop projects, conduct seminars and workshops ...etc.
- legitimate the work of URI CCs in the region.
- Organize regional and cross-border assemblies . The office organizes a yearly conference inviting representatives from all URI CC in MENA region (about 50 participants attend the conference every year).
- Help CCs in fund raising.
- Organize cross-CC activities.
- Organize a monthly capacity building activity (e.g. workshops on soft skills), film screening, community service events...etc.

Where we are





What URI Cooperation Circles are doing in MENA



Humanity Group

Iris WoMan

Humanity Group

Mercy Group

Jordan Association for widows & orphans care

Debate Club

Help the Natural Disasters Victims

Sohag Community Development

sos

Voluntary Work Community Service

Naya

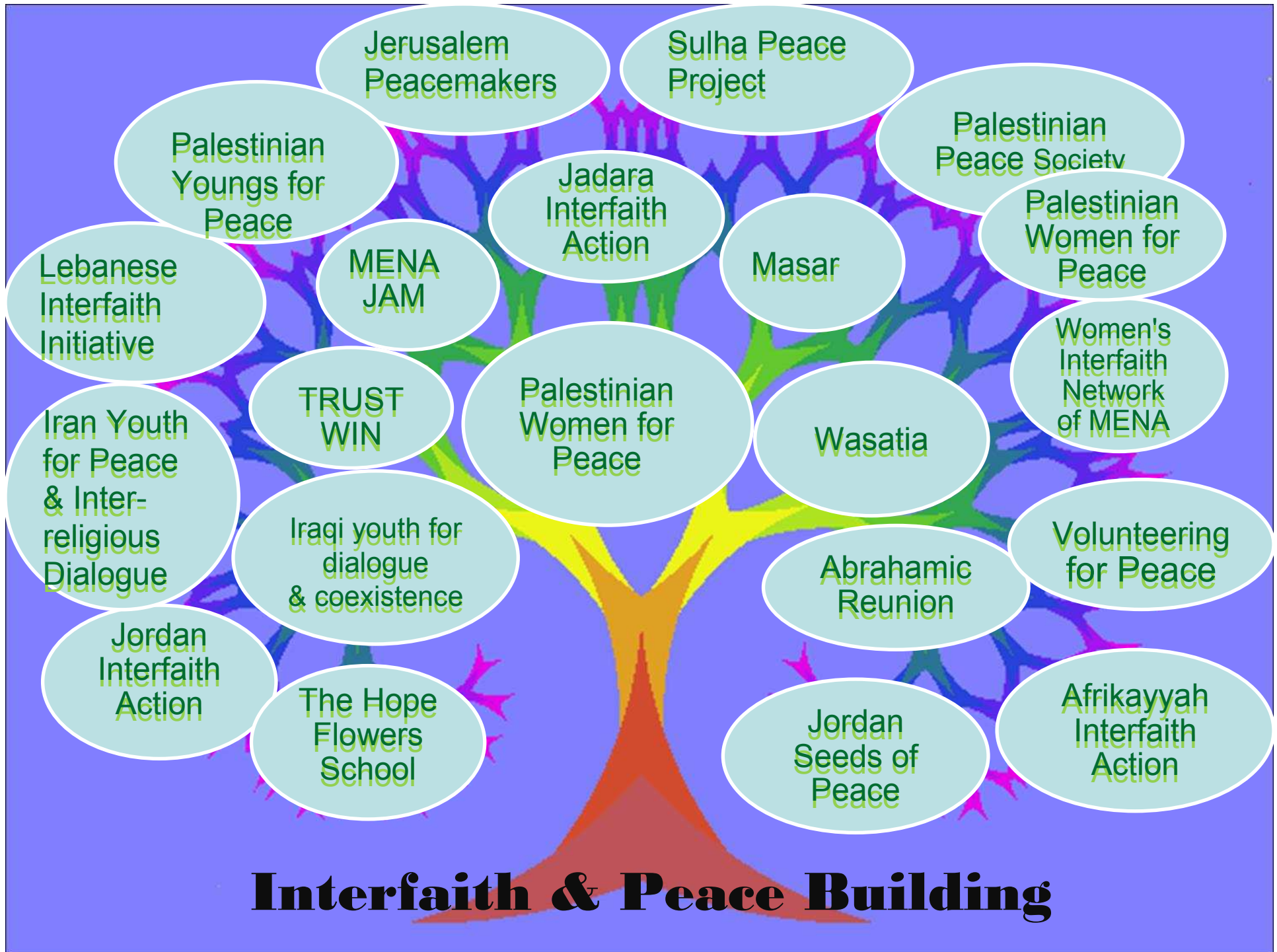
**Voices of
Peace**

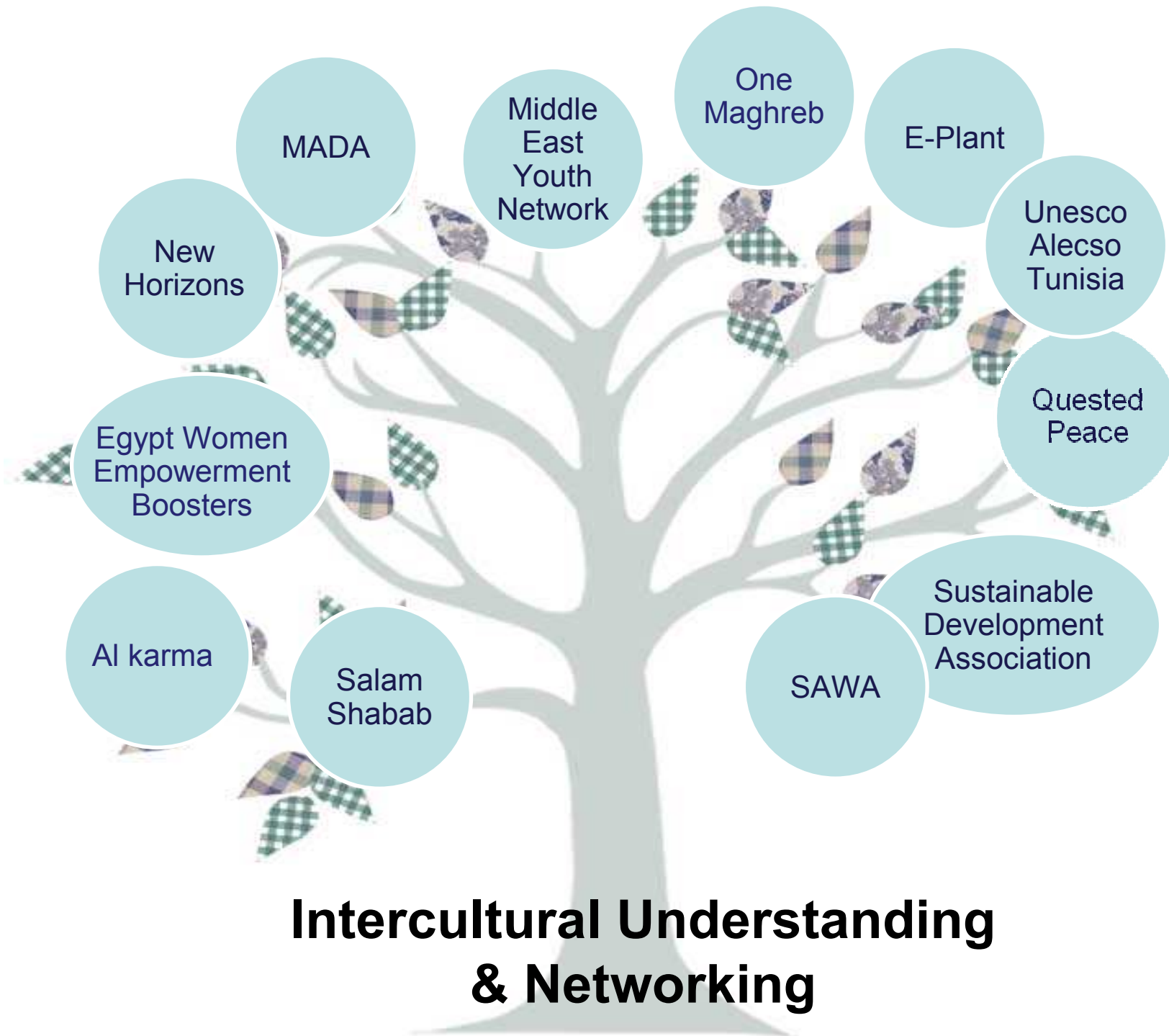
**Music for
Soul**

**HeartBeat:
Jerusalem**

Musaique

Music for Peace







Media and environment protection

"Tree of Life"
Tim Parish 2008



Examples of the work of URI CCs in MENA region

Note: These notes are incomplete without having attended lectures

Sohag Community Development

- Cooperation between Muslims and Christians in building society
- Capacity building
- Medical services for disable and manage a rehabilitation center
- Micro loans
- Food and clothes collection campaigns



Musaique

Breakdown barriers between religions and nations through the language of Music.



**Healing Through Music Workshop, Amman
2009**

Heartbeat

Empower youth musicians by creating opportunities and spaces for young musicians in holy land to work together, hear each other, and amplify their voices to influence the world around them



Quested Peace

Help needy families and less fortunate youth in Jordan, specially in remote areas.

Intercultural exchanges

Capacity building



WIN MENA

Women's Interfaith Network of MENA region

Bring together women from different faiths in MENA region to support each other's work, strengthen the power of women in MENA region, and build sisterhood solidarity among women in conflict areas.



Volunteering for Peace

Enhance peace building at grassroots levels in Holy Land



Lebanese Interfaith Initiative

Promoting interfaith cooperation in Lebanon and connect with peace builders across the glob.



"New Beginning" Conference, towards enhanced US-Muslim relations

Salam Shabab

Manage a network of Arab Youth leaders

Youth leadership program, Lebanon



Jordan Seeds of Peace

Invest in future generation



Tolerance

Using Media to build trust and bridges between people of different faiths and cultures.

