Generations For Peace helps displaced children and feuding youth in Aden

Refresher workshop strengthens volunteers’ capacity to promote respect, acceptance and dialogue

14 May, 2013 – Aden, Yemen: Yesterday, Generations For Peace completed a four-day refresher workshop to strengthen its volunteers’ capacity to encourage and promote peace through sport and dialogue among children and feuding youth in Aden.

The workshop gathered together thirty-eight male and female Generations For Peace volunteers from Aden. The training strengthened their knowledge and skills in preparation for two programmes, promoting active tolerance; respect and acceptance; and supporting the resolution of political differences through dialogue instead of violence.

The first programme uses sport-based activities to engage refugee children from Somalia, children in Aden who have been displaced from their homes elsewhere in Yemen due to conflict, and children in the communities hosting all of these children. Using the power of sport as a universal language, this programme is designed to help them to accept the changes in their lives and to encourage them to respect each other. The second programme seeks to engage feuding youth from different political parties and to support them to use dialogue rather than violence to address and resolve their political differences, encouraging greater mutual understanding and active tolerance.

Tensions between tribes, and fighting between north and south have led to more than 250,000 people being displaced in recent years. In 2011, President Saleh stepped down after three decades of rule, following protests inspired by the Arab Spring. This anti-government uprising gave Al Qaeda the chance to establish several strongholds in Abyan Province. A period of political reform is now underway and Generations For Peace is aiming to empower communities to manage their political differences with understanding and tolerance, to enable a peaceful future for all.

The workshop was facilitated by Hana’ Juma’h, an experienced Generations For Peace Pioneer Facilitator from Jordan. Yaser Altaf, who helped facilitate several sessions, said: “After I attended the GFP Advanced Training in Amman, I was excited that we have this refresher workshop in Aden. This is a motivational opportunity for me and my fellow Delegates to accomplish more achievements in Yemen.”

The Delegates were enthused and inspired by the workshop. Ashraf Gameel, who will be working with children, said: “We all want to spread messages of peace and the workshop provided us with the tools to do this in our communities. It is such a wonderful experience to participate, practice and pass it on.”

Another Delegate, Aya Ebbi, said: “Today we learnt about conflict dimensions and the difference between conflict and violence. We needed a session like this to better understand and plan for the conflict we are addressing.”

Majed Alkavvaz, Delegate, said: “The Samsung Generations For Peace Award for Innovation that we received at the Advanced Training in April made us very proud, and gave us the confidence to continue our work. This workshop has given us the content and skills we need to enhance and expand our programme.”

Boosted by the refresher workshop, the volunteers are all set to run the two programmes with ongoing activities in their communities through to the end of the year.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Generations For Peace:

Generations For Peace (GFP) is a Jordan-based global non-profit organisation founded by HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein and HRH Princess Sarah Al Feisal dedicated to sustainable peace building and conflict transformation through sport, arts, advocacy, dialogue and empowerment.

By providing unique training and continuous mentoring support to volunteer leaders of youth, GFP empowers them to lead and cascade change in their communities, promoting active tolerance and responsible citizenship and working at the grass roots to address local issues of conflict and violence.

Different contexts include inter-tribal, inter-ethnic, and inter-religious violence; gender inequality; post-conflict trauma response, reconciliation and reintegration; exclusion of minorities including IDPs, refugees and people with a disability; and challenges of integration in multi-cultural societies. Conflict sensitivity, and the full participation and empowerment of girls and women, are integrated into GFP’s approach.

GFP harnesses the universality of sport as an entry point to engage with children and youth, and our carefully-facilitated sport-based games provide a vehicle for integrated education and behaviour change. In addition to our sport-based approaches, GFP has also developed arts, advocacy, dialogue, and empowerment activities to support conflict transformation with children, youth and adults in different contexts.

Since 2007, GFP has trained and mentored more than 8,100 volunteers from 46 countries and territories in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Europe. Their peace-building efforts have touched the lives of more than 210,000 children, youth and adults.

GFP has been listed in the “Top 100 NGOs in the World” for 2013 by The Global Journal. The ranking assesses non-governmental organisations according to innovation, impact, and sustainability.

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