

United Nations

World Interfaith Harmony Week

Report, February 2020

Presented By

A Common Word Among the Youth

Contributors

Liliia Khasanova (Russia), Azizah Mutik (Indonesia)
& Uzair Ben Ebrahim (South Africa)

ACWAY Background

A Common Word Among the Youth (ACWAY) is a movement of young and diverse peace ambassadors from around the world who believe that dialogue and interfaith and intercultural action have the capacity to build strong, resilient and peaceful communities.



Traditional Beliefs



Hinduism



Islam



Buddhism

Indigenous Beliefs



Judaism

Agnosticism



Christianity



Jainism

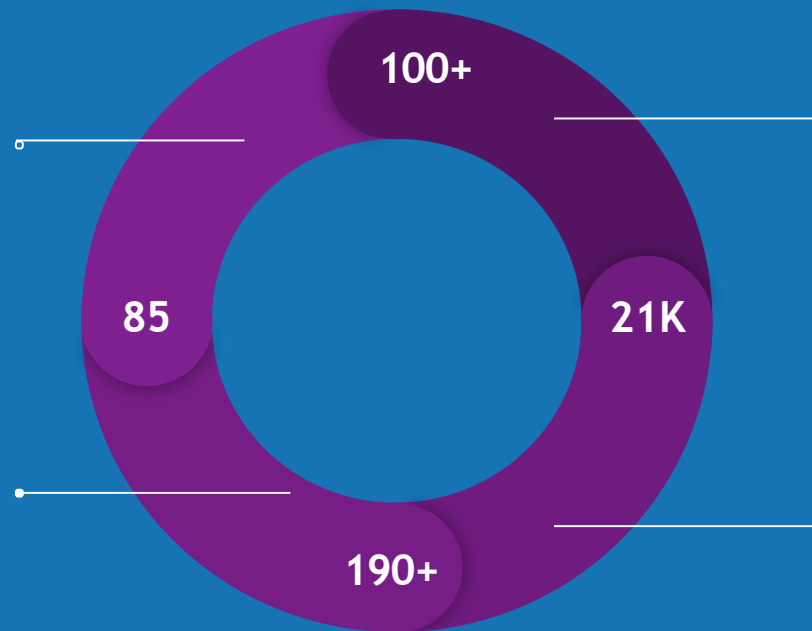
ACWAY in Numbers

Number of Active Countries

Through its expansion,
ACWAY currently
operates in 85 countries

Number of Activities Delivered

Owing to the increase in
ACWAY fellows, over
190 activities have been
delivered



Number of Fellows Worldwide

ACWAY has over 100
fellows who actively
work in the field of
interfaith and
intercultural dialogue

Number of Beneficiaries Impacted

ACWAY has estimated
that over 21'000
individuals have been
impacted

ACWAY & WIHW 2020

- Every year, for the past four years ACWAY Fellows celebrate UNWIHW by initiating and conducting voluntary interfaith activities in their communities: 11 activities in 2016, 15 in 2017, 13 in 2018 and 12 in 2019.
- These activities are initiated across various countries and within specific communities.
- The content matter of activities is diverse and is left up to Fellows to decide. However, the activity needs to bring diverse religious communities together.
- Even though many activities are implemented during the World Interfaith Harmony Week (1-7 February), we have found that Fellows continue implementing activities throughout February in what we now call the Extended Engagement Period.



Graphic Presentation of Activities



Summary of ACWAY-UNWIHW Activities 2020

List of Activities

[Date of Activity - Fellow Name (Location) Name of Activity]

1. Feb 2 - Irene Lee (Taiwan) Interfaith Hack-a-Thon
2. Feb 2 - Sara Rahim & Izzy Ben Ebrahim (USA & South Africa) Webinar: Engaging Institutions
3. Feb 5 - Clement Ngueto (Cameroon) Interreligious Dialogue: Listening to Learn
4. Feb 5 - Elias Gonzales (Mexico) Spiritual Retreat
5. Feb 7 - Nishantha Kumara (Sri Lanka) Women Engagement in Promoting Social Harmony through Interreligious Dialogues

ACWAY /UN-WIHW Extended Engagement Period

6. Feb 19 - Kjersten Adams (USA) Better Together Days: Storytelling and Service
7. Feb 21 - Maria Daka (Zambia) Promoting Interfaith Dialogue and Social Harmony through Sport
8. Feb 22 - Tsiry Randrianavelo (Madagascar) Green Peaceful Weekend
9. Feb 29 - Siby Szymanowska (Germany) Intercultural Sharing

Summary of ACWAY-UNWIHW Activities 2020

Regions Impacted

- Through ACWAY activities during UN-WIHW, ACWAY Fellows have managed to engage within **13 countries**.
- The countries are as follows: the USA, Mexico, Argentina, Cameroon, Germany, Taiwan, Zambia, Czech Republic, Madagascar, the UK, Sri Lanka, Indonesia & South Africa.

Subject Matter Covered

- Owing to the agency of Fellows, the subject matter of activities vary, however, interfaith/interreligious/intercultural engagement is the common thread.
- The themes of initiated activities are as follows: Spirituality, Environmentalism, Information Technology, Top- & Grass-Roots Engagements, Skills Development, Women Empowerment, Social Action /Service, Storytelling, Sport and Cultural Sharing.

Significances

- ACWAY encourages Fellows to use their agency to address issues they are comfortable with but also invites diverse religious and cultural communities to collaborate and actively contribute to building community. The religions impacted and subject matter covered is testimony to this diversity ACWAY prides itself on and supports.

ACWAY Fellow Talks: Engaging institutions

February 2, 2020 (USA & South Africa)

- ACWAY fellows launched a Webinar Series titled: ACWAY Fellow Talks”
- The series was initiated and led by ACWAY fellows Sara Rahim (USA) and Uzair Ben Ebrahim (South Africa)
- The first talk was titled: Engaging Institutions: Leveraging Principles and Practices with quest speakers from the Parliament of the World’s Religions and United Religions Initiative.
- Participating countries included: USA, Argentina, Cameroon, Mexico, Zambia, Czech Republic, UK, Indonesia & South Africa.



ACWAY
A Common Word Among the Youth

Fellow Talks
Webinar Series | 2020
A fellow-designed and fellow-led initiative

in conversation with

**UNITED NATIONS
WORLD INTERFAITH
HARMONY WEEK**

**Engaging Institutions
Leveraging Principles
and Practice**

SUNDAY, 2 FEBRUARY / 16:00-17:30 CMT

Note: Refer to Participant Guide for Zoom link and session information. If you would like to join, contact Sara Rahim: sararahim06@gmail.com for more information.

Miriam Quezada
Program & Communications Manager
Parliament of the World's Religions
United States of America

Sarah Oliver
Global Youth Coordinator
United Religions Initiative
South Africa

Sara Rahim
ACWAY Fellow
United States of America

Session Moderator

World Interfaith Harmony Week
PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS
uri UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE
interfaith

info@acway.org @ACWAYProject @acwayofficial @ACWAYProject

Interreligious Dialogue: Listening to Learn

February 5, 2020 (Cameroon)



- In the context of Cameroon National Youth Week, ACWAY Fellow, Clement Ngueto, organized a dialogue session.
- The dialogue session introduced various groups to the importance of interfaith dialogue/work in local communities in Africa.
- The event hosted participants from diverse cultures and faiths in Santchou, Cameroon.
- Participants had training in actively listening to each other's stories and shared values of love and peace.
- Read more about the event [here](#).

Interreligious Dialogue & Women: Promoting Harmony

February 7, 2020 (Sri Lanka)

- The event was delivered by ACWAY Member, Nishantha Kumara.
- The event brought together 17 women from Buddhist and Islamic communities.
- The aim was to host a dialogue session about the role of women in promoting social cohesion in their communities.
- The majority of participants affirmed that this was their first time to engage with other faith communities and expressed the willingness to participate in future related events.



Better Together Days: Storytelling & Service

February 19, 2020 (USA)



- The activity "Better Together Days" was organized by our fellow Kjersten Adams
- The event was held in Utah, United States.
- The gathering comprised of diverse storytelling, speaking about the idea of service and sharing a light intercultural dinner.
- The gathering focused on the learning about the values we share across religions.

Interfaith Retreat

February 21-23, 2020 (Mexico)

- In Guadalajara, ACWAY Fellow, Elias González organized an interfaith retreat in Chantepec, Jalisco, México.
- The event was attended by 19 participants from 7 different religions.
- Participants took part in several inter activities: participating in Shabbat; sharing canticles for all the traditions, and talking about personal experiences as practitioners in each tradition.



Promoting Interfaith Dialogue and Social Harmony through Sport

February 21, 2020 (Zambia)



- The event was organized by ACWAY Fellow Maria Daka
- It addressed the current ritual killing, human gassing and mob justice that Zambia is facing in almost every province. More than 200 people: religious leaders, school pupils teachers and community members took part.
- The project resulted in people becoming well informed and enlightened about the issue, reminded us on the importance of love and peace and what religion says about love, contributed towards breaking stereotypes, where people became open minded despite their differences.

Please watch [this video](#) for more info.



Green Peaceful Weekend

February 22, 2020 (Madagascar)



- Organized by ACWAY Fellow Tsiry Randrianavelo
- The Green Peaceful Weekend gathered 180 people from the ages of 3 to 70.
- The event focused on an activity called "seed of peace planting".
- As a consequence of the encounter, 2500 seeds were planted and the participants were trained in medicinal trees identification.
- The group also engaged in activities regarding awareness of peace concepts.

Intercultural sharing

February 29, 2020 (Germany)

- This event was organized by ACWAY Fellow Siby Szymanowska.
- It addressed the lack of interest and misconception towards other faiths that people generally have in Germany.
- The event provided a safe space where people could open up about their religious background and share experiences and knowledge.
- About half of the participants belong to the temple where the event was held. The other half was comprised of Muslims, Christians, Agnostics and Atheists.





Where To Find Us

For more information, feel free to find us and contact us on the following accounts:



acway.org



info@acway.org

Address to Liliia Khasanova & Azizah Mutik



facebook.com/ACWAYProject