

BADER

CHAMPIONING THE VOICES OF
LIBYA'S YOUTH PEACE LEADERS



BADER | بادر

'Bader' is an Arabic word which loosely translates to 'initiate', a call for young Libyans to start up their own peace projects.

The 'Bader' campaign was launched on Facebook on 17 February 2021, on the 10-year anniversary of the Libyan uprising. The campaign provided a platform for young leaders from different communities in Libya to talk about their experiences of promoting peace, social cohesion, and women's inclusion. By amplifying the voices of young peace activists, Bader sought to inspire others to take action. Within a month of its launch, the Bader Facebook page had received 15 thousand likes and over 500 stories had been submitted by young activists across Libya. Through the campaign, 3 young leaders were selected to receive grants of up to 20,000 LYD to implement their projects. This booklet profiles 19 of Bader's most outstanding participants.





TOHA FARAJ

Toha is a health activist from Sirte and member of a local civil society organization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Toha contributed to a number of initiatives to manage the health crisis locally. As the needs of migrants are often overlooked at times of emergency, one of these initiatives focused on supporting foreign workers by providing them with face masks and hand sanitiser, while also advocating for other local organisations to contribute to efforts to support migrants. This proved to be successful as civil society groups in the city came together to help the migrant community. Toha also contributed to initiatives to raise awareness of COVID-19 prevention in Sirte by distributing educational posters in key public places. In the future, Toha would like to conduct an initiative that introduces environmentally friendly and food safe grocery bags in Sirte's bakeries to reduce the use of plastic bags. In addition to building up landfill waste, these bags present major health risks as they release toxic substances when the plastic comes into direct contact with hot food. Toha's proposed initiative would address both of these issues.



Naseem Bin Halim

Naseem is a 24-year-old science graduate from Zliten who is passionate about advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. His goal is to help people with disabilities participate and integrate into social life without the need for constant assistance. He is the head of the Engineering organisation for Development, which focuses on constructing ramps for accessibility in public buildings. His most recent project has been the construction of access points to the beach in Zliten to ensure that everyone can enjoy the seaside. Naseem would like to continue the work of his organisation to build ramps in the pavements of Zliten and at the entrances of public buildings, such as the University and Social Security Office, so that people with disabilities and the elderly will be better able to access these places.



SALEM IBRAHIM

Salem is a civil society activist from Benghazi who works at the Civil Society Commission. He is committed to supporting young people to start up and manage their own organisations and create civil society support networks. He recently launched an online platform called 'Impact', which helps people launch their own community projects. Salem also focuses on raising the awareness about the importance of a legal framework to protect civil society in Libya and to support civil society actors to advocate to government decision-makers. Salem's aspiration is to organise a series of training sessions to sensitise Libyan politicians and decision-makers about the key challenges and obstacles that Libyan civil society currently faces, including government restrictions on civil society activity and the impact that civil society organisations have on the ground. These sessions would include information on international principles of civil society protection, the role of civil society in dialogue and national reconciliation, and the value of establishing and managing peace-building networks.



OMAR EQLAIWAN

Omar is an activist from Tawergha who is committed to supporting displaced Tawerghans in eastern Libya and those who would like to return to Tawergha. He launched a fundraising initiative to support Tawergha residents with material supplies and is now working on organising some vocational trainings in handicraft and other skills that the Tawerghan displaced community can use to generate income until the local economy is restored and new job opportunities are generated, particularly for young people.



MARYAM AHMED

Maryam is an activist from southern Libya whose work focuses on social peace and coexistence. She launched an initiative called 'We are Family', which aimed to spread a culture of social cohesion in her community. So far, the initiative has reached over 670 people, in a series of dialogue sessions on the role of religion, women and human rights in contributing to peaceful coexistence. Maryam's plans are to continue to promote community dialogue and work on strengthening livelihood opportunities for young women and IDPs, as well as providing assistance to families in need.



FARAJ BIN YOUNES

Faraj is a 26-year-old activist from Benghazi. He is committed to providing humanitarian support to vulnerable groups and promoting peacebuilding among youth. He joined the Boy Scouts in 2005 and is currently a member of the 'Tamoh' Organization for the Rights of Women and Children, as well as a member of the Students' Union. His interest in promoting peace among young people began when he attended a youth forum in Derna bringing together youth leaders from across the country. This experience made him realise that young participants, regardless of where they came from, shared the same aspirations and faced similar challenges. From this forum came the idea to launch a 'peacebuilding walk' across key archaeological sites in Libya, with the aim of engaging young people in more remote areas and building links among youth in different parts of the country. Faraj's proposed initiative is to develop this idea into a series of joint camping trips involving young people from different cities in Libya.



ZAHRA ABOUBAKER

Zahra is a 25-year-old Zoology student and an environmental activist from Sebha. She has been involved in civil society since 2005, when she joined the Red Crescent and took part in a number of trainings and workshops on strengthening social peace, combating hate speech and promoting psychosocial support. It was through these local networks that she was able to launch an initiative called 'Fasila', to plant trees and promote afforestation in the Al-Jadidah Park in Sebha. Through her project, seedlings were handed out to local residents to encourage them to plant their own trees, raise awareness about environmental issues, and spread a culture of re-greening. Zahra's project proposal is to widen this initiative and plant trees across the city to combat desertification and promote a greener, healthier public environment in the city.



BASEM AL-SHOOL

Basem is a 28-year-old graduate in computer engineering and a civil society activist from Al-Zahra. He started volunteering at a young age as a Boy Scout, taking part in many environmental and tree planting campaigns and charity events. Basem launched an initiative called 'Let's Work', which provided vocational training to 250 young men and women in vocational in areas including basics of computer science, electronic repairs, first aid, and hair styling. Basem built on this initiative by setting up an incubator to support young people starting their own businesses, which has so far helped 25 young men and women with skills in digital marketing and content creation. Successful business ideas were then supported with a small grant, and many of these companies are continuing to grow. Basem would like to launch a new programme called 'First Aiders' to train 300 young Libyans to work as paramedics alongside medical professionals to help manage the COVID-19 crisis.



MONA SHAHA

Mona is a 29-year-old media activist from Sebha with a degree in Radio and Television Media. She has launched an online radio station called 'Voice of Peace' to promote social cohesion in the south of Libya. The radio station will broadcast in the three languages spoken by Sebha's different community groups, Arabic, Tebu and Targi, to promote inclusion and mutual understanding. The radio station will host young people from these community groups to spread positive messages of peaceful coexistence. Mona is fundraising to purchase the necessary transmission and studio equipment that will allow her team to develop the project and move from internet to radio broadcasting, so that they can reach more people in Sebha and the Fezzan region.



RANA AL-QATRANI

Rana is a business management graduate from Benghazi and the director of the Lebda Organization for Cultural Heritage. She organised a music and culture festival showcasing the Libyan Amazigh heritage, which took place in both Tripoli and Benghazi. The festival sought to raise awareness about the range of cultures that co-exist in Libya and, in particular, to celebrate the Amazigh culture. Given the success of the Libyan Festival of Amazigh Music and Heritage, the Libyan Ministry of Culture endorsed it as a recurring annual event. Rana was unable to organise the festival after the second year due to the conflict and the pandemic, but she is still planning to hold its third edition as soon as possible.



LOTFI AL-BARKOULI

Lotfi is a 25-year-old computer science graduate from Sebha. He is passionate about social media, which he uses to advocate on a range of social issues. Lotfi has produced a number of short films to raise awareness about migrants' rights, women's rights and, most recently, COVID-19. Aware of the importance of countering hate speech, Lotfi also launched an initiative called 'Listening', which promotes dialogue and mutual understanding. As part of this, he hosted a workshop that brought together young people between the ages of 20 and 28 from different community groups across Sebha to forge stronger relationships and promote peaceful coexistence. To build on this, Lotfi would like to train young people from different community groups in Sebha in photography and content creation. The idea is to provide technical skills and opportunities to young people to work together across divides and produce impactful content that can convey positive messages about peace and social cohesion.



FAWZIA KHALIFA

Fawzia is a civil society activist and charity volunteer from Benghazi. Her work focuses on helping families in need through providing material and psychological support. Fawzia is an advocate for peace and reconciliation, working to rebuild the social fabric that has been damaged through ongoing conflict. One of Fawzia's most recent initiatives has been to assist displaced families from western Libya. She has worked with the Guwarsha Local Council and the Dispute Settlement Committee to help manage local tensions and allow families to return safely to their homes. Fawzia would like to establish a training centre to help women access livelihood opportunities, particularly widows and divorced women who have to provide for the household. The centre would provide women with employable skills, help them find job opportunities, and support them to develop their business skills.



ABDULAZIZ ABUHALLALA

Abdulaziz is an environmental activist from Tripoli. In 2014, he launched a clean-up campaign in Wershafana, an area that has experienced significant armed conflict. The main streets were cleaned and damaged road lights were repaired, making the area safer and more accessible for residents. To achieve this, Abdulaziz mobilised volunteers of all ages and encouraged them to work together to create a sense of citizenship and ownership of the campaign, which was led by the local community. In the future, Abdulaziz would like to launch a tree-planting campaign in public places and damaged forests around Tripoli to combat desertification, while also selecting trees that produce nectar and pollen to help safeguard the declining honeybee population.



SALEH SHAHAT

Saleh is a student activist from Sebha and a member of the Sebha University Students Union. In November 2020, he organised a football tournament between teams of young players from Sebha, Benghazi, Tripoli and Jufra. The initiative aimed to bring together youth from different cities who found themselves on different sides of the conflict divide, establishing relationships and channels of communication through sport. In the future, Saleh would like to continue to work on peacebuilding and awareness raising initiatives targeting Sebha University students.



IBTIHAL BAKEER

Ibtihal is a 25-year-old business management graduate from Tripoli and a student in aviation engineering. Ibtihal started community volunteering at a young age, when she joined the Girl Scouts. During the recent conflict in Tripoli, Ibtihal volunteered with a humanitarian relief group to provide support to families displaced due to the war. She also organised a training programme called 'Connected' to help women and youth access livelihood opportunities through training in entrepreneurship and business management, which proved to be in high demand in the local community. Building on this, Ibtihal would like to develop more initiatives to train women and youth in different fields to find employment in the local job market, while also promoting youth and women's economic empowerment.



ABDUL-QAYYUM MUHAMMED

Abdul-Qayyum is a 28-year-old activist who used to manage the Salam TV media offices in Tobruk. An active member of civil society, he joined the Tobruk Social Peace Partnership in 2017. In 2019, he produced a show for Salam TV titled 'Peace is Our Future', which focused on addressing political polarisation and promoting reconciliation in Libya. The programme consisted of eight episodes and focused on four cities in Eastern Libya: Benghazi, Tobruk, Al-Qubba and Al-Bayda. It voiced different perspectives whilst also conveying the message that there is more that unites Libyans than what divides them. Despite the challenging context, the program quickly gained an audience. Abdul-Qayyum would like to build on this initiative by conducting a series of workshops on social peace, focusing on the positive role that tribes and social relationships can play to promote cohesion. Another project on the radar is to train media professionals to report more objectively, avoid fuelling conflict, and spread messages of peace and reconciliation.



ABDUL-MAJEED AL-AMIN

Abdul Majeed is a 29-year-old member of the Union of Civil Society Organisations and of the Qatrun Reconciliation Committee. Abdul Majeed has worked on a number of projects to assist IDPs who fled Qatrun due to the conflict, including providing emergency housing, clothing and medicine. In his role on the Committee, he has also cooperated with the International Organisation for Migration to support migrants, particularly by strengthening livelihood opportunities for young people. Another initiative that Abdul Majeed would like to implement is to set up a business enterprise in Qatrun to encourage young people from different community groups to work together, while also accessing job opportunities through the business enterprise.



HANA ABDUL HAMID

Hana is a 27-year-old economics graduate from Sahel. She is a Red Crescent volunteer and a member of the Sahel Social Peace Partnership (SPP). With the SPP, Hana has worked on an initiative to support elderly people living in a local care home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the project 'Be Stronger Than The Disease', Hana focused on distributing masks and sanitisers to help contain infections in the care home, while also supporting elderly citizens to understand what was happening through the pandemic. She has also organised awareness raising sessions on COVID-19 for students. Hana would like to carry out a new initiative called 'I Will', aiming to provide vocational skills to unemployed women living in rural areas to help them earn an income through the establishment of a confectionery production facility. The project would support and train women to produce, market and sell their products. The project would target illiterate women in particular, who do not have the qualifications and skills to access other forms of employment.



MOHAMED AL-ATOUCHI

Mohammed is a 33-year-old playwright and media activist from Zuwarah. He has worked as a correspondent for news outlets and has recently produced a drama series that aired in Ramada. Mohammed has established a theatre group in Zuwarah that focuses on reconciliation and peace through arts. He has recently contributed to writing and producing a theatre play that focuses on mental health issues facing young people who have been affected by the war in Libya. Mohammed's aspiration is to launch a new theater performance that promotes peace and reconciliation in Libya, which would be shown in different cities across the country.

Peaceful Change initiative (PCi) works to break cycles of violent conflict and build the mechanisms and relationships that support long-term peace.

PCi recognises the potential of the Libyan youth to be positive change actors and to promote a culture of peace. Through the Social Peace and Local Development (SPLD) programme, PCi supports young Libyans' efforts to play a greater role in decision making around peace, security, stabilisation, governance, and local development. To do so, PCi works with young people to strengthen their skills and provide opportunities to design and lead on their own initiatives. By enhancing the visibility of youth leadership stories, PCi aims to inspire more young people to engage in peace initiatives, while also shifting social perceptions more broadly about the positive role that the Libyan youth can play in creating more peaceful and inclusive communities.

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Peaceful Change initiative

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