

OBJECTIVE 03

To support reconciliation, dialogue, closer relationship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities

FREE EXPRESSION IN CULTURAL AND ARTS SECTOR

SHIRIN JETHA DAĞSEVEN & KATHERINE KOTSIREAS

MOSAİK
A CONVENER FOR
ALL CREATIVE'S INVOLVED IN
ARTS, CULTURE AND LITERATURE
IN THE MENA REGION AND EUROPE



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Registration of a CSO entitled Mosaik in April 2017.

Mapping exercise to identify key stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Training sessions for the Mosaik founders.

Designing the visual marketing campaign and setting up the social media presence.

ABOUT SHIRIN JETHA DAĞSEVEN AND KATHERINE KOTSIREAS

Shirin describes herself as a passionate peace activist with experience working in inter-communal civil society projects in Cyprus. Katherine, who has worked for bi-communal organizations/initiatives for many years in Cyprus, immediately clicked with Shirin and they have remained friends ever since. They wanted to establish a new civil society organization called Mosaik that they describe as a convener for all creatives involved in arts, culture and literature in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe.

STORY OF THE ACTION

Through Grow Civic support, Shirin and Katherine wished to acquire seed funding for a new literature, arts and culture organization that would exclusively work on hosting cultural events (theatre, literacy, film screenings, debates, discussions and so on) for the general public.

"Having both left our respective jobs in 2016 to explore new paths, we both felt that we wanted to create something unique. We wanted it to be something that we could put our heart and soul into, which created opportunities for others and ourselves in ways that we felt strongly about. After discussions and brainstorming sessions, we decided to create an organization that was centered in Cyprus but had connections to the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. An organization that focused on the notion of free speech and human rights, particularly within the sectors of arts, culture and literature".

Shirin Jetha Dağseven

They aimed for the organization to become a hub for artists, writers and performers from across Cyprus to facilitate inter-communal activities based on freedom of expression, the 'building of bridges' and common humanity. They hoped that these activities could lead to local, inter-communal, and international collaboration, and become a celebration of diversity and inclusiveness.

"The aim of Mosaik is to provide a platform to bring authors, poets, journalists and artists from across the MENA region together, while at the same time building a network and sharing best practices with those from Europe. We believe that Cyprus and Cypriot artists are key elements in such exchanges, with an emphasis on promoting inter-communal collaboration as a mean of dismantling barriers, both physically and within the minds of artists and society at large. These efforts are providing an invaluable tool in promoting an understanding of the other, on multiple levels and in more contemporary contexts".

Katherine Kotsireas



"Mosaik", was registered in April 2017 in the northern part of Cyprus. Under the Grow Civic action, the Mosaik team consulted a specialist advisor, who helped create a three to five years strategic plan. This plan contains the organizations' branding and design, mapping tools, sustainability plans, exploration of potential partners and funders, development of a membership scheme, revenue planning strategies, networking and support for regional contacts and opportunities for partnerships. The Mosaik team also worked with a graphic designer to create a corporate image for Mosaik, developing a range of branding materials (business cards, letterheads and postcards), and setting up social media presence.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

A human rights based approach is at the very core of the organization's work, guiding its programmatic development by including a range of activities to bridge the gap between rights holders and duty bearers. By identifying areas in which human rights are unfulfilled and challenged (e.g. freedom of expression of media outlets) the organization is developing programs to highlight these issues and engage stakeholders in dialogue.

The identification and classification of key stakeholders as rights holders and duty bearers was a solid ground for their advocacy strategy to be a success. The team aimed to form the organization as a safe platform for expression, while promoting bi-communal/inter-communal collaborations as a means of dismantling barriers both physically and within the minds of the artists and society at large.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Mosaik has a new board who are working on ideas to create online events and activities to work towards its mission. The team is also setting up a website to help increase its outreach and create a network of collaborators that will also feed into its mapping tool. The Mosaik team believes in the transformative power of arts, culture and literature to bring about social awareness, change, and solidarity.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

mosaikngo
mosaikngo@gmail.com



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