



## Interreligious Dialogue Mapping of the Middle East

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*We are thrilled to share with you our newly released report on Interreligious Dialogue Mapping of the Middle East, which evaluates contemporary interreligious dialogue activities in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. The report introduces a theoretical framework for analyzing interreligious dialogue activities in the Middle East and presents a cross-national analysis of contemporary dialogue trends and challenges. It profiles the major dialogue initiatives active in each country and provides resources to learn more about them.*

In general, the report offers a portrait of a dynamic field in motion whose development reflects both common regional trends and specific national dynamics. Dialogue activities face many political and religious challenges in the region, and the recent decline of interreligious dialogue activity in Turkey highlights its continued vulnerability in the Middle East. Despite these challenges, many of the actors interviewed for this report continue to place great hope in the capacity of dialogue to catalyze spiritual solidarity, social renewal and positive political reform. In many ways, interreligious dialogue activities have become central laboratories in the region where new models of religious and political development are being continuously constructed and tested. These models have the potential to shape the future of religious concerns, social relations and regional politics in the Middle East.

The report formulates seven lessons about the organizational success and social relevance of interreligious dialogue activities in the region:

Lesson 1: Interreligious dialogue in the Middle East is a relatively young field and its growth is directly connected to the major political and social dynamics shaping the region, including the growth of religiously expressed violence.

Lesson 2: The political context of each country affects the development of interreligious dialogue in powerful ways. Most interreligious dialogue organizations perceived local and national political challenges as the most difficult dilemmas they faced in their work.

Lesson 3: Much of the interreligious dialogue activity in the region remains local in scope, at the initiative of faith-based organizations, and oriented to serving basic community needs.

Lesson 4: There is great sensitivity from multiple types of organizations to the foreign interests and influences that may be tied to interreligious dialogue activities.

Lesson 5: There is growing support for interreligious dialogue activities which strengthen citizenship values, even as the exact meaning of those values may change across national contexts.

Lesson 6: There is room for more substantive participation and dialogue outreach to youth, women, conservative religious communities and religious groups that are considered to hold extremist beliefs.

Lesson 7: Strategies of education were recognized as an essential strategy of action which might effectively build dialogue organizations' capacity to participate in the reform of religious

education or education on diversity in the region.

**Full Report in English:** [Interreligious Dialogue Mapping of the Middle East](#)

Adyan is a Foundation for diversity, solidarity and human dignity. Registered as an NGO in Lebanon, Adyan works locally, regionally and internationally for pluralism, inclusive citizenship, community resilience, and spiritual solidarity, through home grown solutions in Education, Media, Policy, and intercultural and interreligious relations.

Source: [Adyan Foundation](#), Lebanon.