

“A day in the life of the follow up team”

by Maria Seryan

For the follow-up team, every day is different, but we have a certain structure for our weekly Monday meetings. We start at 10.00 AM after we have finished devotions with all our colleagues. Sometimes we continue the devotion time and exchange personal prayer points, how we are dealing with certain challenges or difficulties in life, joyful events, anything you want to share can be shared. Those times are precious and really make us grow together as one team.



In other cases one of the team gives a lecture on one of the books he/she is reading at that time, which will give the team new insights and information on how to deal with certain situations they come across in their work in social media follow up. Last Monday for instance we discussed how to deal with pain and the value of pain in life. The lecture sometimes leads to lively discussions, to the extent that our voices can be heard by our other colleagues. Occasionally a colleague pops in just to say hello and to see what's going on - that happens not only when our voices are loud.

The meeting is also used to discuss the questions people have asked us. Together we pray for people and for wisdom how to respond. I am the only foreigner in the team which is based in the Middle East and I feel very welcome and appreciated. It is nice to notice the cultural differences, but sometimes it is quite exhausting to follow all the Arabic which is not my mother tongue. Working with the team has certainly improved my Arabic language skills!

From the viewers of Hope for Tomorrow

Shereen is 18. She is married but far from happy. During courtship and honeymoon her husband showed her much love, but now he is busy and Shereen feels sad and lonely. She is angry and frustrated and cannot talk to her husband; she just cries. We advised her to try to talk to her husband, and reminded her that she is now in a new situation which usually gives stress. She was happy she could share her feelings with us.

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Arab Christians proclaiming the Gospel on TV and internet in the Arab world



CONTACT & FINANCE INFO

Arab Vision Trust Fund is registered as a charity in Cyprus
email: contact@arabvision.org
website: www.arabvision.org

In the USA, checks can be sent directly to our American office. Arab Vision Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization.
Arab Vision Inc. (USA)
1101 S.Broadway St. #120
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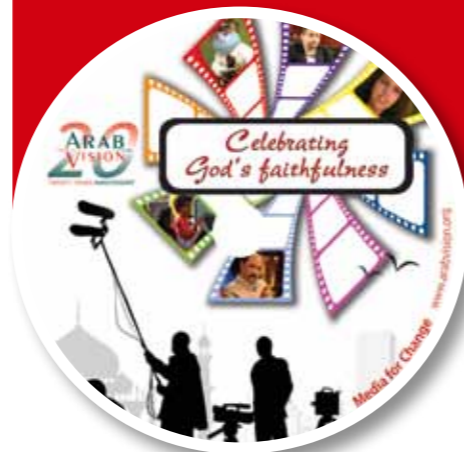
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MEDIA FOR CHANGE



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Pause and reflect

What an enormous privilege Arab Vision has to declare gospel truth to the Arab World! Well, we know that, don't we?

But it is good from time to time to pause and reflect upon it. And what a privilege we have who, in one way or another, support that work with our prayers and gifts.

The events of the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2 are, of course, in one sense unique yet in another they have been repeated increasingly down through the ages.

Arab Vision is one among many means the Holy Spirit uses to enable people to hear "the wonders of God in (their) own tongues".

The very same Holy Spirit who enabled that international group in Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago to hear God's Word brought Arab Vision into being some 20 years ago, and continues to sustain and protect and guide and inspire and enable the production of programs to this very day.

Arab Vision depends on your prayers and your gifts, and we thank you heartily for them.

But above all we depend on God's Holy Spirit who, as Jesus promised, guides into all truth (John 16:13).

“In our own tongue...”

When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ...we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?' (From Acts 2, NIV)

Perhaps UNESCO should have chosen the day of Pentecost as the International Mother Language Day (IMLD) – instead of 21 February: "a day to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism."

Isn't it amazing that the Holy Spirit is so interested in someone's native language? At Arab Vision we rejoice of course when we read in Acts 2 about the residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Egypt, Libya and Arabs – people in "our" part of the world.

Our aim is to make programs in the mother tongue, the heart language, of the people in the Arab World. You may think that it is a straightforward task ... just make programs in Arabic, and that's it. But which Arabic should we use then? Nowadays the "residents of Mesopotamia" speak a quite different kind of Arabic than the "people from parts of Libya near Cyrene". (Acts 2.9,10)

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is a version of Arabic that is used as a common language in the Arab World, but mainly for newspaper articles, news bulletins in the media and official documents. It is definitely not the language people use in their daily conversations. As the spoken language is the language that speaks to the heart, our programs are seldom produced in MSA. *continued on page 3*



From our viewers:

Afia in Yemen is a widow, living far away from her family. Her son has left the country. Afia is trying to prepare for her daughter's wedding, but she is feeling ill and very lonely. She watched *Women in the Bible* and got in touch with us. She feels that 'her faith is destroyed' and asked for prayer. Please pray for Afia and for the Yemeni people who continue to suffer violence and famine in a 'forgotten war'.

Gabino Boutros
International director Arab Vision

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MEDIA FOR CHANGE

Breaking through the taboo

Our program series *Hope for Tomorrow* about violence against girls and women and sexual harassment is watched by thousands of people and there is much interaction on the Facebook page. More than 37,000 people like the page and average engagement per month (likes, comments and shares) amounted to 6,336 in 2016. It opens the way to discuss issues that are usually covered up because people consider them shameful to talk about.

For many of the women who shared their stories for the first series, it was the first time they had actually talked about these issues. We presented their stories by way of drama sketches, using actors. A female counsellor provides guidance on different subjects, including the appropriate response to an incident of sexual harassment, teaching children to respect members of the opposite sex and learning to set and respect boundaries.

At the moment we are preparing a second series of *Hope for Tomorrow* focusing on different subjects, including sex & internet, child marriage, choosing a life partner, violence against children, child abuse and FGM (female circumcision). The director of *Hope for Tomorrow* says,

"I am happy with these subjects, because the program will discuss issues people normally don't talk about. They are 'shame issues' in the Arab World. People will hear real stories, but because we use actors there is no need for them to openly identify themselves. In the drama we can still feel the emotions of the situation. One of the stories which will be shown in the second series is Manal's story who was abused by her family when she was a child."

"In the series we talk about God in more general terms," adds the producer. "We don't use Christian jargon, so all people can relate to it. They can all turn back to God. Some women think that it is normal that her husband hits her, and we need to tell them that this is not right."

Could you help us make this second series possible? We will produce 13 episodes of 25 minutes. The estimated costs for one episode are US\$ 3800.

A very special region – at a very special time

"We see God's faithfulness in the work of Arab Vision in a very special region at a very special time in which so much is happening. It is good to stand still and look at what God is doing. The Arab World is a region with so much hatred, so much violence and war. One group of people is opposing another and millions of people have become refugees. It is a region with so much pain and grief that I have come to the conclusion that it has a hole in its heart, a Christ-shaped hole. Only Christ will be able to bring peace there."

These were the words of Gert-Jan Segers, leader of a Christian political party in the Netherlands on 8 April when Arab Vision celebrated its 20th anniversary. About 90 people came together, listening to Arab Vision's history and updates on present productions. The three workshops (History of the Church in North Africa; Reaching Muslims in your neighbourhood and A Peek in the Production Kitchen) were well attended.

We have produced an anniversary DVD with several interviews plus a selection from 20 years TV programs; a testimony to God's faithfulness in 20 years media ministry in the Arab World.

The anniversary production is available on DVD or on USB. Please send a mail to contact@arabvision.org if you would like to receive the DVD.

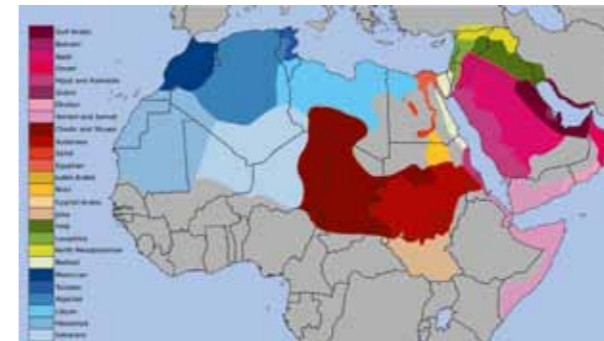


"In our own tongue" (continued)

Spoken Arabic, however, does not come in a standard package which is understood by everyone in the Arab World. People in a mountain village in Yemen can barely understand the Arabic that is used in Algeria and vice versa. There are at least 24 dialects of Arabic spoken in the Arab World.

A simple phrase like "I want" is expressed in many different ways: *ureed* (MSA); *biddi* (Levantine); *ana ayez* (Egyptian); *ana bghit* (Maghrebi); *ana abghi* (Gulf); *ana ashti* (Yemeni).

In the past 20 years we have produced programs in many different dialects of Arabic, including Algerian, Egyptian, Sa'idi, Gulf, Maghrebi, Tunisian, Mesopotamian (Iraqi), North Levantine (Lebanese/Syrian) and South Levantine (Jordanian).



At the fringes of the Arab World, the linguistic diversity is even greater. Amongst the Berber people of North Africa, there are 26 different languages and dialects, further east there are three Kurdish dialects, while Somalia also has its own non-Arabic language.

Arab Vision's programs in Turkish



One of our major partners for broadcasting our programs to the Arab World is Sat-7. Recently they selected some of our programs to be broadcast via Sat7-Türk. The programs will be subtitled in Turkish and will then be broadcast to the Turkish speaking world.

A catalogue of our Christian programs produced over the last 20 years is as pdf available online. See <http://www.arabvision.org/our-projects/>. If you would like to receive a hard copy, please send us a mail to contact@arabvision.org. We are happy to see our programs used in other languages and regions of the world.

30 days of prayer for the Muslim World: 27 May – 25 June



More Muslims have come to Christ in the past two to three decades, than ever before. This month it is Ramadan, a time for Muslims to fast and engage in worship and repentance. It is a time for Christians to make a respectful effort to learn about, pray for and reach out to Muslim neighbours in love. The 30 days prayer booklet or app is available at www.pray30days.org

Can you help?



Our follow-up team - US\$ 2100 per month

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Acts 8:30-31 (NIV)

This time we would like to ask your financial support for our follow-up team. With each program we produce the audience has the opportunity to respond to the message via a specific telephone number and/or via a Facebook page.

When they get in touch with us, we follow Philip's example and we listen to people's questions and concerns and try to provide answers. Just as a newborn baby requires love and nourishment in order to grow, a new believer requires the caring, compassionate follow-up of other Christians.

Depending on their situation, we offer them the possibility to connect with a local church, so they can continue to grow in their faith.

Our follow-up team of 16 people is based in the Arab World. We need an annual amount of US\$ 25,000 to make their ministry possible. (This will cover the costs of salaries, computers, good internet connections, training and counselling, etc.) See also *A day in the life of the follow-up team* on page 4.

Come let us reason together - 26 x 15 minutes US\$ 400 per episode still needed.

Challenging apologetics series by a Lebanese scholar and pastor

Our follow-up team asked for an apologetics series with drama segments. The idea is to discuss historical events or habits and put them in today's context, explaining and discussing Biblical principles through these examples and respectfully comparing them to Islamic convictions. The short sketches are ideal for use on Facebook.