



Anna Lindh -säätiön Suomen verkosto

Coordination of the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) Finland's National Network 2019–2020

Semi-annual report

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Foundation of the Finnish Institute in the Middle East (FIME)

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Summary

The main purpose of the coordinator of the national network is to represent the ALF in Finland and to share information of its activities in Finland, to co-ordinate the activities of the Finnish Network, and to participate to the planning and implementation of the overall ALF plan of action and various programs.

Aims of the project and actions taken during the reporting period


Aim 1: FIME works as ALF's official representative in Finland.

It provides information on the ALF upon request as well as actively promotes the visibility of ALF in Finland by informing, reporting and advertising its activities in social, cultural and human affairs.

Actions:

Mandate and Funding: FIME applied for and received a no-cost extension until the end of 2021 to its mandate as the HoN of the National Network of Finland. The Secretariat also informed that the ALF service contract between the ALF and FIME can be extended until 30th September. The necessary addendum to the original contract was signed in June.

3 Newsletters were sent for members and others interested in following the news of ALF programs and activities. In addition, a total of 15 other emails were sent to all in the ALF mailing list to invite them to both national and international trainings and online cultural events, to announce calls for proposals & to advertise various ALF programs.



An international call for 1+1 Anna Lindh Foundation **Micro Grants** (2000€ and 4000€ grants, officially service provision contracts) was finally announced! The ALF members had been asking for micro grants since at least 2014, so this was an excellent step. The call was passed to the Finnish network. At least 4 network members were preparing a funding application, of which at least 2 were submitted and 1 received the funding. There may have been more as the Secretariat does not inform us of these, and the members may forget to let us know.

www-pages are updated regularly to inform of ALF activities and other intercultural activities with 16 updates and 3540 page views during the reporting period.

Social media with 86 updates in Facebook and Twitter. These included advertisements of international online events/training of and funding from the ALF, advertisements of online events by members of the Finnish Network, job advertisements, announcements and advertisements of trainings and other possibilities provided by the HoN of Finland.

Aim 2: FIME participates to the international ALF Work.


The coordinators communicate with the ALF secretariat on a regular basis and welcome any international ALF events to take place in Finland. FIME also prioritizes sending members of the Finnish Network to participate to international ALF activities. The coordinators actively participate to the development of governance, activities and communication of the Foundation with emphasis on the need to address issues crucial to the region, transparent governance, well-defined work schedules and open and youthful methods of communication. The coordinators also are in regular online communication with ALF network coordinators in other countries and work in collaboration with the ALF Board of Governors.

Actions:

There were no regular webinars organized by the ALF secretariat. There was very little e-mail or other online communication with the ALF Secretariat. During the first 40 days of the period, we received no communication from the Secretariat.

Communication with other national network coordinators was regular. There were regular (for a while weekly) meetings with the HoNs of Sweden, Germany and Lebanon with more occasional contacts with both HoNs & members of the Networks in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Greece, and Turkey. General call for song nominations was sent to all networks. We received song submissions from 23 countries.

Celebrating Our Diversity 2 FIME was a partner in 1+1 project coordinated by the Swedish Network. The project title was "Celebrating our Diversity 2". The other partners were the German and Lebanese networks. Due to covid19 restrictions on travel, the event was transformed



into a series of online activities. The project included: a 2-day Civil Society Toolbox training on 8.–9.4. with 25 participants from the Finnish, Swedish, German and Lebanese networks, and a 2-day civil society forum on 20.–21.5. with 35 participants from 16 different countries. In addition to these, there was an extensive online cultural program.

The cultural program coordinated by FIME included the following: 1) HAWA multilingual radio program 1st episode at 18. & 24.5. at Helsinki Open Waves - online radio (submissions from 23 ALF countries, 3370 listeners). 2) Movie night with directors on 19.5. Screening of 2 short films & Q&A with directors organized together with Academy of Moving People and Images, a member of the Finnish Network (22 participants). 3) Mebe, the funniest Kurd in Finland on 20.5. stand-up comedy (110 views of the video). 4) Concert by MA Rouf on 28.5. Finnish-Iranian suufi-jazz (concert video has 460 views).

Other cultural program included:

- Do it yourself music workshop by Banda Internationale 17. & 24.5. (Germany)
- “Song for Beirut”, Cultural Street Association 17.5. (Lebanon)
- Poetry “Zajal Poetry”, Libanaises pour l’Égalité 17.5. (Lebanon)
- Storyteller Barrak Sabih 20.5. (Lebanon) 3
- Dance “Diversion”, World Dance Company 20.5. (Sweden)
- Elin Tellius concert 20.5. (Sweden)
- Tuqa Taherin tarab-concert 20.5. (Egypt)
- Spoken word, PEN Lebanon 21.5. (Lebanon)
- Stand-up Joe Eagen 21.5. (Sweden)
- Spoken word, Sara Rahmeh 21.5. (Denmark)
- Interactive theater workshop, Boat People Projekt 26.5. (Germany)
- Storyteller Nassim Alwan 27.5. (Lebanon)
- Theater “Where are we going now?!” Tiro Arts, 27.5. (Lebanon)
- Tarabband concert 28.5. (Sweden)
- Kristina Issa concert 30.5. (Sweden)

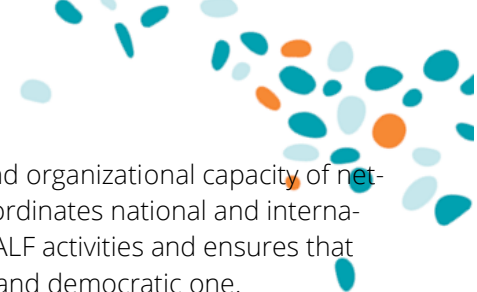
Most of the cultural program is still available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/celebrateourdiversityalf/>

The 2020 ALF Euro-Med forum was replaced by the **Virtual Marathon for Intercultural Dialogue (VM)**. FIME received extra funding from the ALF to produce program for the VM. The Finnish contribution included: 1) Cook Lebanese with Maggie 8.5. Interactive online Lebanese home cooking night (1,1T views, still available: <https://fb.watch/5QvVqTfZpn/>) 2) Hawa2, multilingual radio program at Helsinki open waves on 25th and 31st May (2929 listeners), and 3) an international training on intercultural competences on 31st May (38 participants from 11 different countries) in cooperation with Samarbetsbolaget, a member of the Swedish Network.

Aim 3: FIME strengthens the Finnish network.

The coordinators actively promote the network’s membership and inform potential new members about activities and possibilities of support and assistance the ALF can offer. FIME facilitates the improvement



of the project management, financial and organizational capacity of network members. FIME organizes and coordinates national and international seminars and training related to ALF activities and ensures that the ALF Finnish network is transparent and democratic one.

Actions:

A streamed **discussion event on polarization** was organized together with the members of the Finnish Network: Fokus association, University of Helsinki and UNESCO Chair Arto Kallioniemi. One of the panelists was President Tarja Halonen (the stream had 516 viewers and the Youtube video has had 276 views). The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ha3AmvTY0TI>

The Steering Committee convened on 9.2.2021.

There were 2 **capacity buildings** organized for members: A) a 10-week video workshop together with Dyalog Der of the Turkish Network on 2.3.-18.5., with 20 participants from the Finnish, Swedish, German and Croatian Networks. The workshop provided participants with skills to shoot and edit their own promotional project videos. Some of the videos produced can be viewed on the ALF FB-page. B) A training on how to make a good press release given by STT on 19.4. with 16 participants. The training provided tools to gain more visibility for the activities of the organizations.

Through FIME's cooperation with other HoNs, several members of the Finnish Network had the possibility to participate to trainings provided by other Networks.


During the reporting period, the Network was broadened with 2 new members. 2 applications by individuals are still in process.

Challenges and Achievements

International level

Challenges in administration

This period was a very bad one for the international ALF. Its General Director Dr. Nabil al-Sharif and an employee of the secretariat passed away because of covid19. These sad events naturally caused disarray in the Secretariat. A different kind of problem was that the webpages of the ALF, including the member database, were down for several weeks due to a massive fire of the server center in France. This made finding partners for the ALF micro grant applications quite difficult. Deadlines had to be extended and programs postponed. For some reason the internal ALF monthly webinars were discontinued. After the initial quiet of 40 days, email communications with the secretariat functioned relatively well with a contact person in the outreach team (networks team). However, delays in administration and implementation of programs continue. For example, the Intercultural Trends Survey was not published in time (at the moment the data is available via an online HUB, but no report yet). A more problematic case is the budget of Celebrating Our Diversity project. The event was transformed from a face-to-face one to an online event. The changes to the budget



to accommodate this are still to be approved by the secretariat. The project implementation finished at the end of May and the project period ended at the end of June. This uncertainty influences the plans for the fall of the Finnish Network, as we do not know if we can invoice the personnel costs from the project as planned. Representing and promoting ALF in Finland is made more difficult by lack of information from the Secretariat. This is a continuing issue. In the spring we were asked to give a presentation on what's happening in ALF for Moniheli board, but had to decline the request as we are not informed of ALF plans.

Achievements in action

This spring was the most active period for the ALF on the international level since the summer and early fall of 2017. There were the larger international 1+1 projects such as Celebrating Our Diversity, there were the Secretariat-funded Virtual Marathon activities organized by the HoNs of different countries as well as the numerous VM events organized by members with the support of the micro grants. As almost all activities were online, they tended to attract truly international participation. Doing workshops and trainings with people from different countries is great for promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding. However, it is more difficult to facilitate networking in online settings, which has always been an important component of ALF activities.

The Finnish network

Challenges:


The Finnish network was functioning rather well and attracting new members, in the pre-corona situation. Now, after 1,5 years of restrictions, during which most members have had to recreate their mode of activities, we are not sure how relevant a service provider we are for members, as the members are not very active towards us asking for services and proposing joint events and programs. The members expect us to provide guidance in ALF application procedures. However, we do not receive any special training from the ALF to do this, and one interpretation we did of the guidelines was wrong and the member did not get the grant/service contract.

A specific challenge during the spring was the excessive workload of producing online cultural program for the Virtual Marathon and Celebrating Our Diversity at the same time. As this was the first time the coordinators produced online cultural programs, this took a large part of the working time of the 2 part-time coordinators. There was too little time for contacting members and for Network development.

Achievements

New members: the Network was joined by two new members in the spring.

International online trainings: A great number of online trainings for members were either provided by FIME or by other ALF actors on the international level. A total of 28 representatives from 21 member organizations of the Finnish Network participated to ALF trainings of/via



the HoN of Finland. Some of the more active members took part in several trainings. In addition, there were 41 foreign or non-member participants to the trainings provided by FIME. One of them participated in two different trainings.

ALF micro grants: HoNs and members have been demanding micro grants for years. Now they were launched and were popular among the Finnish members. Several members were interested in submitting applications, at least two did, and one got the grant.

New audiences for ALF cultural programs: The audiences reached in the online cultural programs were much larger than anticipated. International partnerships: The Finnish Network is a desired partner in international ALF cooperation. Through participation, deeper and more intensive relations are created.

On future prospects: Online events and trainings should be retained as one part of the ALF activities even after the covid restrictions are ended. Micro grants should be continued.