

Unite Lebanon Youth Project

Lebanon

David Bakis

Organization type:

nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector

Budget:

\$250,000 - \$500,000

Website:

<http://www.unitelebanonyouth.org>

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Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

At ULYP we bring disadvantaged Lebanese, Palestinian & Iraqi refugees together to deliver empowerment and self-efficacy programming via many modalities, sport being a major one. We have a 24,000 square meter campus, but its currently all farmland - and there's no open space enough for the kids to play their favorite sport, soccer. My idea is to have NIKE make a futbol pitch for these kids.

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

There's no wide open space on our 24,000 square meter campus for the children to play soccer. We have the space, but we don't have the resources or funding to build the soccer pitch.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

In Lebanon, politics and religion always get in the way of unity. By bringing kids together from different backgrounds and religions to play sport, learn about being a part of a team, and what it takes to win (unity), we'll really help launch the younger generation of Lebanon to grow up with more tolerance and mutual respect for one another.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

We piloted our project last month by bringing together 7 Palestinian refugees, 7 Iraqi refugees, and 7 disadvantaged Lebanese children (aged 9-11) together for an 8 day retreat focusing on teambuilding, cooperation, and trust. It was so successful, we are doing 5 more retreats this summer while we hopefully can get our soccer pitch constructed.

About You

Organization:

Unite Lebanon Youth Project

Section 1: About You

First Name

David

Last Name

Bakis

Website

Organization

Country

Section 2: About Your Organization

Organization Name

Unite Lebanon Youth Project

Organization Phone

961 3 31 606

Organization Address

Debbieh, Lebanon

Organization Country

Your idea

Country your work focuses on
Website URL<http://www.unitelebanonyouth.org>

Innovation

Do you have a patent for this idea?

Impact

Actions

Approaching Nike!

Results

I believe if NIKE saw our campus and potential - we WILL get a soccer pitch!

What will it take for your project to be successful over the next three years? Please address each year separately, if possible.

Simply, it comes down to funding. We have a 400,000 usd budget - and so far the Swiss, Norwegian, and American governments have given us grants. However, construction of a soccer pitch is not allowable in any of the government grants. Our hope is to find sponsors - like NIKE - that will be able to build us a soccer pitch.

What would prevent your project from being a success?

Nothing. Even if NIKE can't or won't sponsor a soccer pitch for us, I will personally, make sure the kids get a soccer pitch.

How many people will your project serve annually?

1001 10,000

What is the average monthly household income in your target community, in US Dollars?

\$100 1000

Does your project seek to have an impact on public policy?

Sustainability

What stage is your project in?

Operating for less than a year

In what country?**Is your initiative connected to an established organization?**

Yes

If yes, provide organization name.

Unite Lebanon Youth Project

How long has this organization been operating?

Less than a year

Does your organization have a Board of Directors or an Advisory Board?

Yes

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with NGOs?

Yes

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with businesses?

No

Does your organization have any non-monetary partnerships with government?

No

Please tell us more about how these partnerships are critical to the success of your innovation.

Making a connection with local NGOs - Zaitina - to provide job training for our kids in our summer camps. Making a connection with World Vision

we've teamed up with local NGO, ZAKIRA, to provide photography training for our kids in our summer camp. we've teamed up with world vision, where they will be using our campus for part of the summer for their retreat, leaving us behind much needed bunk beds! We've teamed up with UNRWA to provide us a local Palestinian chef to cook for our kids. It really has been a community feel - everyone pitching in. It takes a village!

What are the three most important actions needed to grow your initiative or organization?

1. Trust from local and international partners
2. Trust from our beneficiaries
3. Trust from our sponsors

The Story

What was the defining moment that led you to this innovation?

I brought a group of 20 Palestinian refugee children to Melek Nimer's property. She brought a group of her elderly Palestinian refugees to her property for a joint bbq, swimming, music, games...etc.

Melek decided then to transform the property into Unite Lebanon Youth Project and hired me to create it - so we can do this every day!

Tell us about the social innovator behind this idea.

Originally trained as a Family Therapist, David began his career providing therapy for runaway and gang-involved street youth in Boston. David briefly dabbled as a Crisis Clinician for the Boston Emergency Services Team, and then moved onto provide school-based therapy for several inner-city schools before setting out on his overseas journey as an international School Counselor.

Counseling at international schools in Istanbul, Copenhagen, and Beirut for a 6 year stint, it wasn't until 2007 when David launched the Al Thulathy Al Mareh initiative - recognized and honored by the United Nations Development Program - this project made an attempt to break down barriers and provide reconciliation opportunities for Lebanese and Palestinians to join together. Concurrently, David had also begun, El Rahelet - since absorbed by Social Support Society - a program that buses groups of Palestinian refugee children out of 5 different camps across Lebanon, giving them a lot of first time opportunities such as horse-back riding, swimming, and bowling.

David has volunteered in the slums of India with Goan street youth, and makes trips to the West Bank to volunteer and peace-keep at various checkpoints and conflicted "hot-spots." David holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Southern Maine, and a M.Ed. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Massachusetts - Boston. He is licensed in the U.S. as a Mental Health Counselor.

David Bakis is from Massachusetts, USA.

How did you first hear about Changemakers?

Web Search (e.g., Google or Yahoo)

If through another, please provide the name of the organization or company

50 words or fewer

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