



Ḳulluna Muwatinun – We Are All Citizens

PAX Youth Project in Iraq

Through local Iraqi partner-organizations, Dutch peacebuilding organization PAX supports a nationwide network of young, Iraqi activists who envision a more inclusive Iraqi society, in which people from all backgrounds can realize their potential.

Through the years, the group of young participants has enjoyed trainings in which they learned to work together, approach decision-makers, or conduct a social action study on local societal issues. Examples of these can be found on the project's [Facebook page](#), or [the website](#) that serves as an archive. In addition, the participants were awarded micro-grants for activities aimed at bringing together peers from different sectarian backgrounds. These learned them to plan, budget, and implement activities that frequently made a huge difference in cross-sectarian understanding.

Currently, PAX supports youth researchers in conducting studies on *demographic change*. These take place from Ninewa to Baghdad, and show interesting trends demonstrating that diversity and pluralism in Iraqi society are under severe attack in Iraq. By offering the new generation in Iraq a shared *pillar of identity* – citizenship – PAX and partners hope to contribute to a more just, inclusive, and peaceful Iraq.

Within the proposed project, the main short-term goal is empowerment of the engaged network of Iraqi youth by offering them an *operational* and *follow-up* perspective. This means that we offer possibilities to organize self-owned and self-designed activities which are key to reach this specific target group. The requested grant would allow PAX and our Iraqi civil society partner to facilitate the operational perspective of the Iraqi youth, after which a success would consist of the following among other things:

- At least 150 Iraq youth have successfully implemented 10 to 20 activities, aimed at inter-sectarian encounter (for example have organised dialogue sessions or cultural celebrations). These will take place in at least 7 governates in the country;
- Relevant starting points for continuation of inter-sectarian relations and follow-up programming with the same target group;
- Increased awareness of Iraq's diversity and peaceful coexistence within target group;
- (At least) one successful example of advocacy from the youth towards local authorities.