# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Achievements during 2015</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Strategy (2016-2018)</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Departments, Organizations &amp; Structure</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidents &amp; Executive Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Departments &amp; Service Programs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Overview</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECC Partners &amp; Friends</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Churches</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The Middle East Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches relating itself to the main stream of the modern ecumenical movement, which gave birth to the World Council of Churches and other regional ecumenical councils throughout the world.

MECC is the tangible expression of the Christian presence in the region and works to unify the visions and attitudes among the churches, especially in issues related to the Christian Presence and Witness in the Middle East. The question of Muslim-Christian dialogue is one of the most prominent among the current issues.

Furthermore, MECC is a Bridge that has 3 main links which serve its ecumenical mission: It is a Bridge among Eastern Christians, between Christians and other religions in the Middle East, and between the Middle Eastern Churches and the Western Churches (including the Churches of Africa and Asia).

In its Annual Official Report 2015, the MECC invites you to become better acquainted with it, its vision, its mission and its work. The Annual Report includes: the achievements of MECC during 2015; MECC’s Strategy that will be pursued during the next three years (2016-2018); MECC Organization & Structure; MECC Executive Committee & Presidents; the work of MECC’s Departments and Service Programs (ERS, DSJ, INCDR) including the Regional Office in Jordan; a Financial Overview (Summary of Budget); and MECC Partners and Member Churches.
The beginning of 2015 has been a fruitful time of establishing roots in several of MECC’s core areas, enabling the Council to grow steadily in the coming years. The achievements of the MECC General Secretariat in 2015 include the following:

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AT THE DEAD SEA, JORDAN**

The year began with a productive meeting of the Executive Committee on January 26, 2015. The meeting was hosted by the President of the Orthodox Family, H.B. Patriarch Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, all Palestine and Jordan. MECC Presidents resolved to provide relief for Christians and Muslims displaced from Syria and Iraq. The meeting renewed the call for the release of the kidnapped bishops and an end to hostilities in the region through political means while demanding a halt to the supply of weapons. The committee commemorated the centennial of the genocide which targeted Armenians and Assyrians and announced its plan to organize a seminar and memorial for the victims of the massacres. The Executive Committee meeting was an opportunity for member churches to reinforce their ownership for the council, have an updated report about the general situation, and also take several decisions concerning internal and managerial affairs for MECC.

**PARTNERS MEETING BEIRUT, LEBANON**

A highlight of the first half of 2015 was convening a large group of international MECC partners for a round-table meeting in the head offices in Beirut, Lebanon. 28 international partners, representing churches, ecumenical relief & development organizations as well as ecumenical bodies came together to show their renewed interest in partnering with the Council.
The meeting was hosted by the Coptic Orthodox Church headed by His Holiness Pope Tawadros II of Alexandria and in St. Mark the center, Nasr city in Cairo. The meeting concentrated on the importance of Christian unity by calling for the unification of the date of the celebration of the Resurrection, as well as efforts to strengthen the Council’s departments and programs and to facilitate their access to the world, especially to Christians in the Middle East.

The MECC has five affiliated programs in this category: Diakonia and Social Justice (DSJ); Inter-Church Network for Development and Relief (ICNDR); Syrian IDPs Program – administered by the Syria office; Iraqi & Syrian Refugee Program – administered by the Jordan office; and The Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR). Secretary General Fr. Michel Jalakh made several trips to meet with partners, Ecumenical forums, and Interfaith NGOs in the first half of 2015. In total, the Secretary General made 21 trips to 14 countries in which he delivered lectures, gave interviews, and participated in seminars, all the while advocating on behalf of MECC and Middle Eastern Christians to decision-makers and world leaders.

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The activities of the Secretary General further include his preparation and coordination with various parties and organizations to participate in, contribute to and organize several events in which are related to Christian Unity, Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue, Countering Extremism, Humanitarian Relief, Diakonia, Media etc.
DEVELOPING MECC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:
CATALYST FOR CHANGE

The MECC General Secretariat adopted the Catalyst for Change plan as one of the Council’s communication strategy projects to develop, maintain and implement an MECC public and church media strategy. The process is established by the Communications Department which consists of staff entitled to specific duties related to communication, press and social media.

During 2016, the communication department will guide the rebuilding of the departmental based on the “Primary Focus for 2015-16” plan and will have these goals:

1. Develop and implement an internal collaboration strategy and a media strategy plan
2. Develop a new model for social media activity
3. Conduct leadership and staff media training
4. Work with the web content coordinator/ outside vendors to rebuild the MECC web site

Along this plan, collaboration with staff and member churches will be initiated on internal (MECC) and external levels (Regional/Member Churches)

A list of project activities will be implemented with the following intended outcomes of the communication department work:

1. Raising the profile and impact of the MECC.
2. Training and supporting staff in communications work
3. Strengthening the member church communications network
4. Participating in the increase of MECC Resources.

In this manner, outcome indicators will be taken into consideration to follow up the process. As a direct outcome for the above course of action, a Facebook page is always up to date and a Twitter account is set up to continuously post news about MECC activities, The General Secretary activities and travels as well as news related to member churches.
PRESENTING THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS
TO THE HOLY AND GREAT PAN-ORTHODOX SYNOD
AS A PROPOSAL TO UNIFY THE DATE OF EASTER FOR ALL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Prior to the Convention of the Holy and Great Pan-Orthodox Synod, which is regarded as an exceptional occasion for the Christendom, the MECC General Secretariat contacted the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to address the Pan Orthodox Synod with a proposal to consider unifying the Easter/Pascha celebration, the greatest of the Christian feasts.

This proposal suggested adopting the first Sunday after April the 15th and took into consideration the following:

1. The Syrian Orthodox Church’s initiative and wish that it has expressed in its Holy Council in 1984.
2. The recommendations of the Aleppo consultation in 1997 which included the participation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Russian Patriarchate and the Antioch Orthodox Patriarchate.
3. The initiative presented by the Coptic Orthodox Church in 2014 towards Christendom for the unification of the celebration of the Resurrection Feast date.
4. Pope Francis’ positive response towards the Coptic Church’s initiative and his hope as publicly expressed in 2015 to agree on the Resurrection Feast date.
5. The approval of the Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Holy See of Cilicia, to adopt a unified date for the celebration of the Resurrection Feast.
6. The non-contradiction of the provisions of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325) with regards to setting the date of the resurrection.

In this manner, the MECC presented several documents in its proposal to be included in the agenda of the Holy and Great Pan-Orthodox Synod:

1. “Towards a Joint Date for Easter” - Statement of Aleppo Assembly (1997);
2. “Common Response to the Aleppo Statement on the Date of Easter/Pascha” - A document produced by the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation (1998);
3. The text of the initiative presented by the Coptic Orthodox Church in English and Arabic (2014);
4. The document that has been prepared in the department of Faith and Unity in The Middle East Council of Churches and in which we speak of the mentioned proposals in a deep and scientific manner (2015).
The MECC Strategy for the next three years (2018-2016) addresses the major challenges the Council is facing today at the different internal and organizational levels, at the ecclesial and ecumenical levels, and at the regional contextual level characterized by changing societies, violent threats to Christian Presence & Witness, and to peace and security for all in the cradle of Christianity.

This Strategy takes into account several factors: The Council’s Mission Statement and General Goals towards visible Unity and Common Ecumenical Witness; the new realities and challenges in the life of the churches; and their relation to the Council and their role in the ecumenical movement. It also takes into consideration the needs expressed by member churches in light of the many regional challenges and developments that threaten their existence and witness.

Finally, it addresses the imperative to revive and consolidate the Council’s mission and witness on sound structural, organizational, administrative and financial requirements to ensure professionalism, responsibility, efficiency, transparency, and accountability towards the Council’s constituency and the ecumenical partners.

The Strategy is based on several foundations: the orientation and recommendations of its different Governing bodies (General Assembly, Executive Committee, Committees and Commissions); the recommendations of the latest and various assessments and SWOT analyses undertaken both internally by the MECC General Secretary, staff, and a team of church-related resource persons and externally, by its ecumenical partners, namely Church of Sweden and ICCO Cooperation in May 2014. This plan is also in line with the WCC 10th General Assembly Strategic Direction “A Pilgrim-age of Justice and Peace.”

Bearing in mind the various internal and external challenges facing the Council and the Middle Eastern churches in the present and difficult regional context, the MECC adopted a three-dimensional approach to elaborate the three-year Strategic Plan, defining its strategic objectives and goals at three levels of equal importance, the interplay of which is essential for a successful achievement of the organization's aims and mission.
To achieve these goals by taking the best advantage of its core strengths and opportunities, the MECC will pursue six core strategic directions during the next three years of its journey:

1. Strengthening relations and coordination with member churches and ecumenical partners, ensuring their participation in the life of the Council;

2. Involving and engaging youth in all aspects of the MECC structure, organization and activities, as main actors and potential future of the church, ensuring the continuity of Christian presence and witness in the region;

3. Considering, encouraging and implementing gender-based approaches at the level of committee/commission membership nominations, and of all capacity building or other ecumenical activities undertaken within the Council and its member churches;

4. Sustaining Christian-Muslim dialogue and cooperation at the level of religious and lay leaders and at the level of the youth in particular, to strengthen relations, cooperation and collaboration in addressing major challenges facing the region and the Christians;

5. Reinforcing spiritual life and sharing through ecumenical prayers organized at all activity levels and using available ecumenical resources to promote ecumenical spirit.

The strategic directions and priority issues described above will be elaborated further in strategy and operational documents on the different and specific aspects of the Council’s work.

The MECC is committed to being and remaining the strong fellowship of all the churches of the region bearing witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in unity and peace, and to engaging with full responsibility and accountability in the planning and implementation of joint work.
MECC ORGANIZATION CHART

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
64 Delegates, 16 from each of the four families: Evangelical, Oriental Orthodox, Orthodox, Catholic

PRESIDUIM
One of each family

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
24 Persons, 6 from each family
Administrative and Financial Supervision

External Audit

Legal Adviser

SECRETARY GENERAL

Commission

Associate GS 3

Communication Department

Administration and Management

Finance Department

Core Programs

InterChurch Dialogue

Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Media, Communication and Documentation

Capacity Building and Formation

Service Programs

DSJ: Diakonia & Social Justice

ICNDR: Interchurch Network for Development and Relief / Lebanon

ERS: Ecumenical Relief Services / Syria

DSPR: Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees

Offices

Lebanon (HQ)

Syria

Jordan

Egypt
PRESIDENTS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

THE FOUR PRESIDENTS:
- The Eastern Orthodox Family: His Holiness Catholicos Aram I, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia
- The Orthodox Family: His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem
- The Catholic Family: His Beatitude Patriarch Mar Ignatius Joseph Younan, Syriac Catholic Patriarch
- The Evangelical Family: Bishop Munib Younan, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

Second: Members of the Executive Committee:

**ORIENTAL ORTHODOX FAMILY:**
1. H.E. Anba Bishoy
2. H.E. Anba Benyamin
3. H.E. Bishop Mor Athanasius George Saliba
4. H.E. Bishop Mor Clemis Daniel Kourieh
5. Dr. Jean Salmanian

Proxy:
1. H.E. Bishop Boulos Safar
2. Mr. Guirgues Saleh

**ORTHODOX FAMILY:**
1. H.E. Bishop Nicholas Antonioss
2. H.E. Bishop Costa Kayal
3. Minister Kamel Abu Jaber
4. Father Nicholas Ioannis
5. Attorney Elias Moukheiber

Proxy:
1. H.E. Bishop George Vladimirov
2. Mr. Michael Spyro

**THE EVANGELICAL FAMILY:**
1. Rev. Megrdich Keregozian
2. Rev. Dr. Habib Badr
3. Rev. Fadi Dagher
4. Rev. Rifaat Fathi
5. H.E. Bishop Michael Lewis

Proxy:
1. Rev. Emmanuel Gharib
2. Rev. Dr. Riad Jarjour

**THE CATHOLIC FAMILY:**
1. H.E. Bishop Paul Sayyah
2. H.E. Bishop Boutros Marayati
3. H.E. Bishop Joseph Absi
4. Father Rifaat Bader
5. H.E. Bishop Kyrillos William

Proxy:
1. Attorney Ibrahim Traboulsi
2. Mr. Raphael Kopali
MECC DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

MECC related Service Programs have evolved to adapt and respond to the churches’ expressed needs, new priorities and challenges faced, as well as to requests for intervention on behalf of victims created by emerging and current situation. The MECC related Service Programs will be guided by MECC strategic objectives, goals and directions, and priority issues established for the period 2018-2016.

In order to respond and address the various matters and needs in the region today, The Middle East Council of Churches is active at the regional level and has 3 main Departments and Programs in this regard:
- The Ecumenical Relief Service (ERS)
- The Interchurch Network for Development and Relief in Lebanon (ICNDR)
- Diakonia & Social Justice (DSJ)
- MECC Regional Office in Jordan

1/ The Ecumenical Relief Service (ERS)

The mission of ERS is to uphold human dignity of needy marginalized and vulnerable people, victims of war and forced displacement, through humanitarian aid and support to victims of man-made and natural disasters, and to improve the lives and livelihoods of needy internally displaced persons and refugees irrespectively to faith or religious backgrounds. Presently, the program responds to the emergency needs created by the crises both in Syria, Lebanon and in Jordan with a plan to extend its programs in Iraq.

As the Syrian Conflict enters its fifth year; the scenery is the same: Displacement, irregular migration, violence, killing, poverty etc. With fragile political solution of the Crisis in view, the implications increase and the price of it all is paid by all the sects of the Syrian Population.

Since the MECC Executive Committee meeting, which was hosted by His Beatitude Theophilos III in Amman, Jordan, there has been increase in the number of people affected at all levels and increase in the phenomenon of illegal migration by sea from those seeking humanitarian refuge in the countries which opened their doors to the suffering Syrian Population, with all the repercussions of this migration on the migrants themselves and on the host countries. (Check the video on YouTube: A Story of Unknown Journey by Sea)

As to the humanitarian response by the Middle East Council of Churches, it was modest relative to the expressed needs it received from MECC registration offices or the Churches. Therefore, the Council has secured over the last few years assistance covering the following needs;

1- Distribution of food and non-food items which includes Hygiene and dignity kits, bedding sets, winter & summer clothing, school kits, blankets, shoes & student hygiene kits.
2- Intervention in the area of WASH (water, hygiene and sanitation) through the rehabilitation of sanitary sections of many public schools hosting big number of students IDPs.
3- Education support to students to cover their annual fee and cash assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs families to cover the rent of their modest apartments.
4- Capacity building for MECC member churches and the staff working in the area of relief through well designed training programs.
5- Vocational training combined with tailored training on business startup and grants to enable potential candidates to launch their micro scale investment.

This year, the Council was able to secure the required funding and in kind shipments from MECC partners to meet the following needs:
- Distribution of winter clothes, summer clothes, shoes, adult jackets, and blankets.
- Distribution of healthy portions for the families, women, individuals, and students, in addition to students’ bags.
- CASH assistance project to reduce the economic burden of vulnerable Syrian families through financial support in Syria and Lebanon in partnership with the Polish Ecumenical Council.
- Restoration of health structures in 32 public schools that host a great number of displaced children from Damascus, and its suburb, Daraa, and Coastal area accompanied with WASH promotion campaign about cleanliness.
The following steps are a roadmap to move forward with this project, which requires a joint effort from all the Member-Churches in the Council:

To monitor the current emerging needs in every country through networking with all the Church and other institutions working in the field of relief.

To establish a forum of all faith-based organizations working in the field of relief and development in every country in order to coordinate better the humanitarian response according to the new needs of beneficiaries.

Building the capacity of member churches and LNGOs in the area of humanitarian low and core humanitarian principles.

To expand partnership with other international faith-based organizations and UN agencies in order to meet the increased needs of IDPs and refugees whose presence in their host countries will remain for many years to come.

To prepare launching Monthly report and the level of each country to reflect the development of the political, social, economic and humanitarian situations so that the intervention of MECC come according to such development in each place.

To develop in the years to come a unified code of conduct and Christian humanitarian principles for all churches in the region, and to develop joined studies on the concept of Diakonia in 21st century and a joined curriculum on Diakonia and relief that can be used in schools and theological institutes.

To expand the Council’s activities to include not only distribution in kind but to include programs of capacity building, empowerment, sponsorship, dialogue, peace building, income-generating projects, resilience, shelter, health, WASH, rehabilitation of education and medical services and reconstruction.

In spite of the modest funding that MECC received over 2015, it was a year of success as many new donors joined hands with MECC and expressed their willing to support more MECC humanitarian programs in the region.

MECC is always guided with the teaching of Jesus Christ and of the good Samaritan example where we all have to look to the needy in equal eyes and to see the face of our Lord in each face of suffering people. The ERS unite has adopted the motto “We serve in dignity”.

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<th>Individual Hygiene Kits</th>
<th>Student Hygiene Kits</th>
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<th>Number of admin staff total</th>
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MECC DEPARTMENTS
AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

2/ The Interchurch Network for Development and Relief in Lebanon (ICNDR)

ICNDR aims to “contribute to a just, integrated and peaceful society in Lebanon through participatory community development, as the ecumenical expression of Christian service”. It embodies Christian values and emphasizes human dignity and worth.

During 2015, ICNDR has executed the following projects:

1- Psychosocial Support and Protection for Syrian and Lebanese Children, Women and Youth in Zahle, South Lebanon and El Koura.

The main objective of the project is to improve the psychosocial situation of the most vulnerable population affected by the Syrian conflict; thus refugee children can cope with trauma and loss associated with conflict and displacement, and the Lebanese host community can cope with the effects of receiving huge numbers of refugees.

610 Children (250 in the South, 210 in El Koura & 150 in Zahle) participated in a full year program activities including Drawing, Music, Child Rights, and Drama Therapy Workshops with the aim of promoting healing of psychological trauma. 120 youth participated in Life-skills coping mechanisms on topics such as: addiction, communication techniques, conflict resolution, dialogue and diversity, and adolescent reproductive health and Trauma healing through drama therapy. 250 Women attended the following workshops: Human Rights, Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence, Personal Hygiene. ICNDR also completed 5 summer camps during June, August and September in Rmeich, Kawzah, Debel and Ain Ebel for Syrian refugees and Lebanese children between the age of 4 and 14. ICNDR had more than 320 children in all the camps.

2- Women Empowerment and Capacity Building Project in Bint Jbeil and Nabaa.

The main purpose of this project is to empower the Women who are married to non-Lebanese men without Legal papers in Mount Lebanon and the women living in south border line by participating in vocational and awareness sessions. ICNDR aims at making a positive change in the lives of women and local communities, and to address the lack of professional skills of needy and vulnerable women, their illiteracy and the neglect of their socio-economic rights. Until June 2015, 96 women in South Lebanon and 62 in Mount Lebanon participated in vocational and capacity building trainings as well as awareness raising sessions.

ICNDR implemented:
- In Mount Lebanon (Nabaa and Sed El Bouchrie Centers): 43 English sessions, 40 vocational trainings, 6 awareness sessions about effective communication, in addition to Practical Nursing sessions in Collaboration with St. Georges University Hospital.

3- Psychosocial Support, Child Rights Awareness & Protection of Lebanese Children in Marjeyoun.

The aim of this project is to raise the awareness of the children towards their rights, and to offer the kids the opportunities to express their ideas and their feelings in an artistic workshop they choose. ICNDR chose to work with children and youth who don’t have any kind of extracurricular activities in Marjeou area.

ICNDR managed to create a quality time for youth where they discovered that they can use their free time productively and constructively by participating in the artistic workshops, awareness sessions and summer camp. 60 Children participated in the Artistic workshops: mainly focusing on music and drawing. Through these activities, children were enjoying their time, learning new activities and expressing their feelings.

During the month of July, ICNDR conducted 8 Child Rights training sessions where the last session was done in conjunction with the summer camp. The children also presented their artistic work to their parents and the community during the last day of the summer camp.

More than 100 kids enrolled in ICNDR Summer Camp. Child Right Training, Awareness sessions and artistic sessions were done during it and ICNDR included also activities such as comedic nights, and rally paper games.

4- Cultivate your Home Garden: Household Food Security.

ICNDR taught local housewives how to set up a healthy garden in order to provide healthy, diversified and nutritious food for their families and to save on their food expenses. This project taught housewives how to plant kitchen gardens and would provide healthy food for the household, in addition to extra income for the family.

The project started in the villages: Chadra, Bterram and Aidamoun in Akkar and koura North of Lebanon and continued to reach the target of 40-50 housewives in 10 villages and to set up a total of 40-50 kitchen gardens in these villages. 10 awareness sessions were executed in 4 villages of Shadra, Aidamoun, Bterram and Bazbina.

40 housewives were provided with the seeds, and the materials needed for planting, growing and harvesting.

ICNDR project staff technically assisted the housewives during the setting of their kitchen gardens. Around 80 housewives attended the awareness workshops. They were motivated to start their own small local home gardening projects.
The Unit of “Diakonia & Social Justice (DSJ)” is one of MECC programs to carry in the sustenance of the Christian churches and their communities in the Middle East, to assist them in implementing their ministries by promoting social reconciliation, human development and self-reliance programs. Through its services to refugees, displaced persons & migrants, and its Human Resources Development program, this Unit is mandated to assist MECC member Churches in their endeavor to develop social service programs in response to local needs through research, training, and consultancy.

Diakonia & Social Justice Unit's Objectives Are:
- To respond to the victim of wars and persecution, to the plight of refugees and migrant groups in the Middle East,
- To implement programs in cooperation with appropriate UN agencies, NGOs, ecumenical organizations and local authorities to promote the ministry of the uprooted
- To respond to the challenges, they face by providing, social and other services,
- To advocate for the migrant’s and refugee rights
- To develop human resources through: studies, information sharing, skill building activities, counseling sessions, seminars, printing materials, lectures to community groups and schools.
- To sensitize the grassroots and the general public in the issues of the migrants, promoting change in their attitude, mentality and behavior.

Diakonia & Social Justice (DSJ) comprises of the following activities:
- Human Resource Development program
- Service to Refugees Displaced and Migrants
- Comprehensive Primary Health Care Service
- Interregional Collaboration
- Advocacy activities

Accordingly, in 2015 the activities of the Unit on Diakonia and Social Justice covered two major areas: Human Resources Development Program (HRD) and Service to Refugees, Displaced & Migrants Program (SRDM)

1- Human Resources Development Program (HRD)
The HRD program which consists of Awareness/Training Workshops focuses on activities that create an enabling environment for Human Development. These include contributing to the development of civil society; fostering social cohesion in local communities; and empowering churches and faith-based organizations (FBOs) with human resources for social, economic, and political involvement. It aims at the establishment of democracy, justice, and economic development to achieve social development in Lebanon.

2- Service to Refugees, Displaced & Migrants Program (SRDM). The Program is mandated to respond to the victim of wars and persecution and the plight of refugees and migrant groups in Lebanon, and to implement programs in cooperation with appropriate UN agencies, NGOs, ecumenical organizations, and local authorities.
The Program included the following Activities:

1- Our Lady Dispensary – Medico Social Centre (2015)
2- Empowering Host Communities in Lebanon (January – October 2015, Bourj Hammoud, Sadel Baushrieh and Anjar, Lebanon)
3- Educational support to Syrian Refugee children. (2015 School Year, Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon)
4- International Coalition on Detention (2015, Geneva, Switzerland)
5- Additional Staff in Gulf Liaison Office (2015, Abu Dhabi, UAE)
6- Repatriation of Stranded Migrant Workers (2015-2016, Gulf countries and Lebanon)

DSJ unit has the following lines of action:

- **Advocacy:** To uphold human dignity and rights of marginalized and vulnerable persons, victims of violence and abuse (Human trafficking);

- **Capacity building and training:** To build the capacity and skills of persons working with and for prisoners, in particular with Internal Security Forces (ISF) and prison personnel, based on human rights approaches;

- **Gulf fellowship of churches:** To reactivate efforts at the Gulf Fellowship of churches with the perspective of addressing issues related to: ecumenism; Christian-Muslim dialogue; government relations; spirituality; non-registered churches; MECC office and the ministry to migrants;

- **Inter-regional collaboration:** To exchange and share information and experiences on refugee and migration issues; and on other issues of concern to the ecumenical organizations and churches. This collaboration includes GENM - Global Ecumenical Network on Migration, International Detention Coalition Meetings, Global Detention Project (mainly research), Gulf Regional meetings, WCC Consultations on Diakonia.
MECC is also present in Jordan to help the refugees who need relief, support and development. In order to help the refugees and address their needs, the MECC pursues the following directions:

- In relief, the MECC has and continues providing humanitarian assistance since 2012. As this humanitarian crisis unfolded, the MECC made efforts that were focused on providing basic relief for the displaced, and support for the vulnerable host.

- In support, MECC is piloting projects focused on psychosocial support. These processes are designed to help these people, rebuild social structures and overcome trauma by becoming active survivors rather than passive victims. MECC aims to empower them through skill development activities, knowledge transfer and community building.

- In development, it is observed that having a close relationship with these communities, has been an eye opener to identify the gaps and the failures of some procedures. Thus, the MECC seeks to collaborate and to initiate long term solutions, like vocational training educational frameworks, which will not only help them through the process of coping but also can prevent the so called imbalance and growing tensions which usually flourishes in a frustrated population. What MECC aims now is to create sustainable communities.

During 2015, MECC in Jordan has provided direct assistance for several communities of Iraqi and Syrian refugees across Jordan. This year, the majority of them were communities seeking asylum in the local churches which are carrying a heavy burden as hosting bodies.

Two of our main appeals during 2015, were targeting the most urgent needs of the hardest seasons, Winter and Summer. For these campaigns the MECC has distributed food parcels, households for summer and winter (including fans, water coolers, fridges, stoves, etc.), clothes vouchers, and cash assistance, benefiting more than 3,000 individuals, including Iraqi and Syrian refugees, and the most vulnerable Jordanians.

On the development and support agenda, the MECC and the OI designed and implemented a new pilot project, to provide psychosocial frameworks and support community building with one of the groups of refugees we were working with for a year.

Middle East Council of Churches & Orthodox Initiative: We Are Present

The Orthodox Initiative and MECC have been working with the refugee communities in Jordan for years. In 2015, they started a pilot project, designed to support and initiate new long term actions. On its continued efforts to improve the life within the refugee communities, the O.I. has launched from October 2015 its new pilot project, We Are Present. The pilot successfully culminated on Saturday the 12 of December 2015 after holding an event called “A Christmas Experience” to showcase the stunning outcome of the workshops and the people behind them.

Under the patronage of His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine, Syria and Jordan, President of the MECC, with the attendance of the Secretary General of MECC, representatives from Greece, Lebanon, Cyprus, Ambassadors, and friends. “A Christmas Experience” was brought to life to raise awareness, and to promote empathy within the local, regional and international communities. Together the hosting community, the refugee participants, volunteers and the guests attended the event. The handmade products were displayed for people to enjoy. There were no predefined prices, the guests were called to freely define the price they thought was appropriate.

The OI and the MECC have started several workshops for the community of Iraqi and Syrian refugees at the Armenian Catholic Church in Ashrafieh, aimed to tap into their
psychosocial issues, empowering them to become more active, rebuilding their trust and giving them tools to leverage their skills in the future.

The main activity line has been handcrafts, a diverse range of techniques applied into creating handmade products. The mission is to improve the lives of refugees and vulnerable people in Jordan, and to help the hosting communities to cope with this new reality, by developing and supporting community-driven initiatives. The goal is to change the stagnant situation of the refugee population into an active engagement of everyone in experiences that are meaningful, productive and profitable.

The key elements of this initiative are to empower a community through collaboration, to implement vocationial training workshops driven by members of the refugee group, to employ and support locals, and to foster the relationships between the refugee community, the neighborhood and the citizens of Amman, by introducing social inclusion and community integration.
In 2015, the Middle East Council of Churches’ funding approximated US $ 5 M, ~ US $500K increase from 2014.

Contributions received through international partners were primarily focused on Relief & Development work and assistance for Syrian and Iraqi refugees and Internally Displaced Syrians. This comprised the majority (81%; 2014-84%) of the Council’s project activities for 2015, implemented by its Ecumenical Relief Services team.

Funding was also received through partner church organizations as well as member churches to support the Council’s various projects in Psychosocial Support, Health Awareness, Empowerment, & Community Development to name a few implemented by the Council’s Interchurch Network for Development and Relief and Diakonia & Social Justice teams.

### CHART DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SUM of Amount in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core activities &amp; Administrative</td>
<td>324187.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness, Empowerment &amp; Community Development</td>
<td>320771.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial Support</td>
<td>314874.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief &amp; Development</td>
<td>4002461.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4962295.66</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Independent auditor's report  
to the members of The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC)

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) ("the Council") which comprise the balance sheet as of 31 December 2015 and the statements of comprehensive income, changes in capital funds and cash flows for the year then ended and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.
Independent auditor's report (continued)
to the members of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC)

Opinion

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council as of 31 December 2015, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.

Beirut, Lebanon
27 June 2016
THE MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (MECC)

Balance sheet
at 31 December 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-current assets</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment</td>
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<td>201,858</td>
<td>52,196</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Due from related parties</td>
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<td>Other receivables</td>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>1,596,353</td>
<td>1,329,119</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1,700,738</td>
<td>1,422,265</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
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<td>1,902,596</td>
<td>1,474,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital funds and liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital funds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital funds</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Non-current liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision for liabilities and charges</td>
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<td>79,859</td>
<td>52,000</td>
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<td>Retirement benefit obligations</td>
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<td>34,233</td>
<td>49,313</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade and other payables</td>
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<td>100,707</td>
<td>97,815</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>214,799</td>
<td>199,128</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total capital funds and liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,902,596</td>
<td>1,474,461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The financial statements on pages 3 to 21 were approved for issue and signed by the General Secretary on 27 June 2016.

The notes on pages 7 to 21 are an integral part of these financial statements.
MECC PARTNERS & FRIENDS

ACT Alliance – Geneva
WCC – Geneva
Church of Norway
Norwegian Church Aid
Bread for the World – Germany
EMW – Germany
Missio – Germany
ICCO-Kerk in Actie – The Netherlands
FELM – Finland
Church of Scotland
Christian Aid – UK
Church of Sweden
Danmission – Denmark
HESK-Eper – Switzerland
Swiss Church Aid
Global Ministries – USA
ELCA Global Mission – USA
Mennonite Central Committee – USA
Mercy Corps – USA
UCC - The United Church of Canada.
UMCOR – USA
Ecumenical Council of Polish Churches.
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
KAICIID
MAAN
Adyan
Amel Foundation
MEMBER CHURCHES

THE COUNCIL’S FOUR CHRISTIAN FAMILIES:

ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES (3):
Armenian Apostolic Church - Catholicosate of Cilicia
Coptic Orthodox Church
Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and all the East

EASTERN ORTHODOX (CHALCEDONIAN) CHURCHES (4):
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa
Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East
Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem
Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus

CATHOLIC CHURCHES (7):
Maronite Church of Antioch
Greek Catholic Melkite Church of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem
Armenian Catholic Church of Cilicia
Syrian Catholic Church of Antioch
Coptic Catholic Church of Alexandria
Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem
Chaldean Catholic Church of Babylon

EVANGELICAL (OR PROTESTANT) CHURCHES (13):
The Evangelical Synod of the Nile
Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East
National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
National Evangelical Union of Lebanon
Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan
National Evangelical Church in Kuwait
The Synod of the Evangelical Church in Iran
Evangelical Church in Sudan
Episcopal Church in the Sudan
Presbyterian Church in the Sudan
Protestant Church in Algeria
Methodist Church in Tunisia
“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary”.

(Galatians 6: 9)
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