

'THE GENERATION PLAN' – UPDATE FOR THE 5TH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING, WESSEX, UK

Background

One of the 3 main themes of the term 2011-2014 is 'Connecting our Community.' This idea of the Generation Plan is to irreversibly alter the way of working of our community, such that strategic decisions will be based on data (both quantitative and qualitative). Currently, the Action Plan undertaken by The World Federation Secretariat (as suggested by the Conference and adopted by The Executive Council); as well as much of the work of Regional Federations could be argued to be based on 'pure' perceptions/feedback from the community leaders and workers.

However, there is a need to gather detailed data on a regional basis including:

- The make-up of our community – by way of size, gender, profile, education, finance, ambition.
- Assess the spiritual development of our community at present.
- Assess the social needs of our community.

There is little doubt that information will need to be reviewed globally as well as on a regional basis.

Furthermore, once the data has been collated it will need to be analysed and a current picture of our community summarised (globally and per region). Thereafter, a team should be formed to use the analysis to create a generation plan for The World Federation and for the Regional Federations with goals, objectives, targets and policies set out for the next 30 years.

The benefits of creating this generation plan will include:

- Clear opportunity to shape the future of our community by creating certain goals and milestones for the future.
- Opportunity to create structured programmes based on the data trends and analysis.
- Ability to create regional-specific set of goals and objectives.
- Opportunity to assess whether the programmes set out are indeed meeting the overall goals of the Generation Plan.

In short the Secretariat humbly suggests that this project, if correctly implemented and if given the resources, energy, enthusiasm of our community leaders (and critically with the support of the Regional Federations) will be a catalyst to greater leadership, accountability and provide the community with a clearer roadmap for progress.

4th Executive Council Meeting

At the last Executive Council meeting in Antananarivo, Madagascar, the Executive Council passed the following resolution:

Preamble:

The World Federation has been in existence for 36 years and it was in 2003 when the organization launched the first ever Strategic Plan for our community. Time has now come that as a community that we need to ensure that a generation plan is created for community to ensure that as the global strategic organization we prepare and plan for the next generation.

It is HEREBY RESOLVED that the Secretariat has the full support, commitment and cooperation from the Members in delivering the Generation Plan. In addition, they commit to provide resources to the Generation Plan to ensure the collection of data from their respective regions. This will enable the worldwide collection of census data under the Generation Plan.

The Generation Plan will be an item of Agenda at the next Triennial Conference.

Action since the Executive Council

The Secretariat has since created a core team of thinkers and experienced community works. They have been strategizing on how to implement this mammoth, historic and complex idea. The summary of their work so far has been:

- Consensus that this project from conception to final delivery will take 2-3 years.
- Clarity that both quantitative and qualitative data will need to be gathered.
- Separate team has created the quantitative data collection (i.e. a draft census questionnaire – Appendix 1).
- This has been based on the work done by NASIMCO, Karachi Jamaat, Birmingham Jamaat and others too.
- Separate team has been thinking about how best to collect qualitative data. This would include:
 - Perceptions of individuals of the community institutions/leadership.
 - People's goals/visions/aims/current conditions.
 - Perceptions on our Aalims/Zakirs/Religious and Social Initiatives.
 - People's ideas for future work and on community development.
- The qualitative team has suggested using forums and focus groups in a sample of Jamaats per Region in order to garner this key information. Furthermore, focus group leaders would need to be carefully selected and trained and a good sample size will need to be utilised.

Areas for further reflection

- What resources will be needed to collect data across the world i.e. in Africa, Australia, Europe, North America, Pakistan, UAE, and India.
- Do we confine this task to areas where the WF has members?
- What resources will WF need to be build centrally to co-ordinate with all the various Jamaats? There needs to be a direct approach by the WF in which the Regional Federations are fully involved in order for the work to be done effectively, otherwise there is a risk that there will not enough data collected.
- How can Regional Federations encourage Jamaats to encourage members to fully partake?
- How can we ensure that people take part in the data gathering so the data received is meaningful?
- What budget should be set aside for the data collection?
- What time-scales will be needed for the data collection?

Some Key Suggestions

- Regional input is needed from the outset. At this stage, a team of the Secretariat has begun the thinking but either the Secretary General of the Region or his appointee should be in the Generation Plan team or kept aware of the thinking to allow Regional Federations to give input consistently. Full Regional Support is needed otherwise this project will be completely ineffective.
- Time pressure should not be applied to this project as it needs to be carefully thought through to be effective.