

# Religions for Peace India Report: Youth Activities

## Time Frame 2018-2020

Shameer Rishad attended the Religions for Peace Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp 2018 held in Myanmar. The camp enhanced his understanding of issues regarding Climate Change and Interfaith work. This camp helped him realise that Multi Religious communities had tremendous potential to impact society by consistently working on thought and behaviour change.

### 1. Formation of RfP India Youth Committee:

After coming back to India with a fresh cross cultural perspective and with guidance of Mr. N Vasudevan, Secretary General of RfP India along with other senior leadership within the organisation Shameer Rishad formed the RfP India Youth Committee.

The committee comprises of the following members:

- Mr. Joel George Alex
- Ms. Priyanshu Krishnamoorthi
- Mr. Varun Sharma
- Ms. Arpita Goel

As per the guidance of senior leadership the youth committee has a multi-faith character (Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh).

To further the agenda of RfP India, the Youth Committee took the following Actions:

### 2. Tarraqi I Foundation, January 25, 2019: A brainstorming session on Our Earth Our Responsibility with a youth group.



A local NGO hosted celebrations on the eve of Republic Day, i.e. January 25. The Youth Chairperson addressed this multi religious group of youth at the end of the celebration taking a session on our moral, ethical and spiritual responsibility towards the environment and impact the youth can make towards the common problem of climate change.

### 3. Fast Football Club, January 26, 2019: An interaction with children from a local slum



The club runs an initiative by the name of “Koshish” (which means Effort) that provides free coaching opportunity to talented underprivileged children (6 to 12 years) as well. While the matches were going on, Shameer Rishad had small group discussions with the substitutes and waiting teams of 10-12 children, covering all 65 children in a couple of hours.

### 4. Unity in Tragedy, Multi-faith prayer meet for Pulwama terror attack Martyrs, February 22, 2019:



There is no denying that the terror attack that took place in Pulwama on 14th of February 2019 was a devastating tragedy which had left the nation shocked, helpless and angry. It was therefore critical to stay united during this highly vulnerable and volatile environment and promote positive peace. With these thoughts in my mind, the youth committee approached friends from different faiths and organized a Prayer Meet for Pulwama Martyrs.



**5. 10th World Assembly Asia Regional Consultation March, 2019: Interaction with Senior Leadership:**



Along with Senior Leadership of RfP India to represent youth the Chairperson was also invited for the Asia Regional consultation in Myanmar. After coming back to India and discussing with the Youth Committee Shameer Rishad wrote a proposal to APIYN and got a funding for 1000 USD.

**5.1. To execute the funding the Youth Committee organised the Our Earth Our Responsibility Youth Day Camp on November 16 2019; following is a brief summary of the project (full project report has been submitted to APIYN & ACRP):**



RfP India Youth Wing received a grant of 1000 USDs from RfP, Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN) earlier this year for implementing awareness among young people on the topic Our Earth Our Responsibility – Harmonizing Peace and Climate Change. The youth camp was implemented

successfully. Besides utilizing the funding effectively, the camp also accomplished forging new relationships with Delhi & Haryana Governments, educational institutions and civil society organizations with follow up sessions planned with twenty educational institutions –ten in Delhi and ten in Haryana for the year 2020.

The newly elected member of the Legislative Assembly participated in the youth camp and assured full cooperation from his administration for similar activities or any additional work RfP wants to take up with the youth in Haryana.

**5.2. The interfaith youth camp had the following objectives as per the initial project proposal.**

1. Plantation drive engaging 200 Indian youth to plant 500 saplings
2. Introduction of RfP India by Senior Leadership to state authorities for lasting partnership
3. Life Skills workshop with selected youth participants
4. Video documentation of Activity

These objectives were successfully accomplished.



**6. Invitation to 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in August 2019; Presentation at the Global Gallery and Group Discussion Facilitation at Youth World Assembly:**



RfP India senior leadership was invited to participate in the 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in August 2019, further to represent youth as the Youth Chairperson of RfP India and as a Transition Committee Member of the Asia & the Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN) Shameer Rishad was given the responsibility of Co-facilitating a session on transforming conflict along with Ms. Meera Santosh International Youth Committee (IYC) Member. Further he was given the opportunity to present his work in India at the Global Gallery event of the World Assembly.



**7. Attended the 5<sup>th</sup> World Parliament of Science and Religion organised at the World Peace Dome; in Maharashtra on October 2019:**



To grow the RfP India Youth Network, learn new concepts from eminent speakers and understand the Indian context better, the Youth Chairperson travelled to Maharashtra to attend Attended the 5th World Parliament of Science and Religion organised at the World Peace Dome.

**8. Invitation to attend APIYN Youth Peace camp, Speak on a plenary and facilitate a workshop in November 2019; as part of the Youth Peace Camp:**



Shameer Rishad was invited for the Youth Peace Camp of 2019 held in Manila, Philippines. There he was given the opportunity to share his experience of working with youth in India on a plenary with Ms. Gasun Han Co-Moderator APIYN, Mr. Yusuke Saito Member IYC and Rabbi Rachel Rosenbluth.

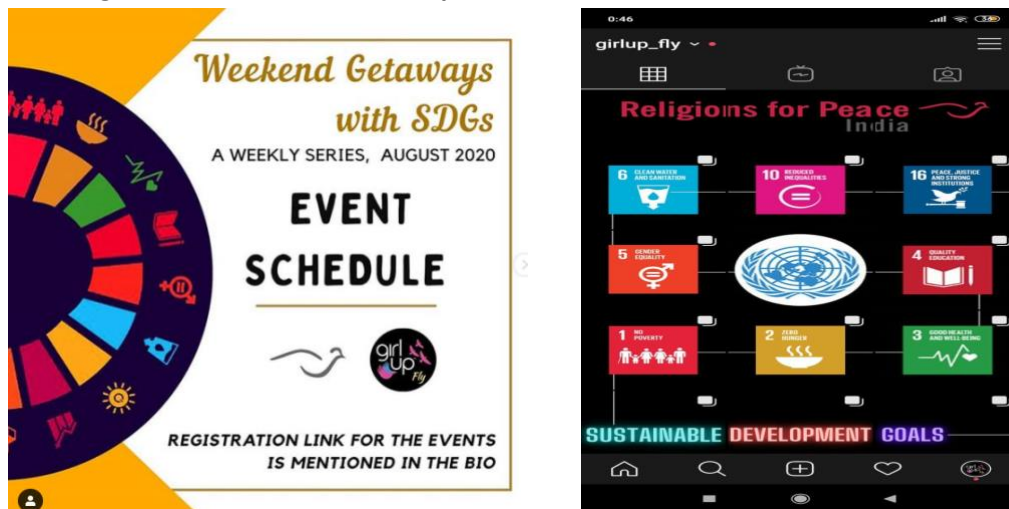
Further he Co-Facilitated a workshop with Ms. Gasun Han. Honourable Rev. Kamiya also congratulated Shameer in his efforts as a young peace-builder in his closing remarks.

**9. Volunteered at a workshop organised by Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR) and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, Maharashtra to understand the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) from a Faith Based Context. March 2020:**



As a result of the Network building done in October 2019, Shameer was requested to Volunteer, handling all presentations and operational tasks done during the workshop jointly organised by JCoR & TISS. During the course of the three days the youth chairperson had the opportunity of interacting with 43 nuns from 21 different Catholic congregations. He also got the opportunity to learn about mainstreaming SDG's in the workings of a Faith Based Organisation (FBO).

**10. Organising in August 2020 Weekend Getaways with SDG's eight Webinar discussions covering different SDG's followed up with a skill buildin**



Due to the outbreak of COVID19 all plans as decided in 2019 of visiting schools and colleges in Delhi & Haryana to promote the theme 'Our Earth Our Responsibility' were disrupted. The RfP India Youth Committee shifted its mode of working online and launched the project, 'Weekend Getaways with SDGs'. Following Goals and Topics were discussed on a weekly basis with 50 interested India Youth:

- *August 2 2020: Introductory Session*
- *August 8 2020: SDG1 No Poverty, SDG2 Zero Hunger*
- *August 9 2020: Skill Building Workshop; How to File a Right to Information Application?*
- *August 15 2020: SDG3 Good Health and Well Being, SDG4 Quality Education*
- *August 16 2020: Skill Building Workshop; How to use Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System for Advocacy?*
- *August 22 2020: SDG5 Gender Equality, SDG6 Clean Water and Sanitation*
- *August 23 2020: Skill Building Workshop; Social Media Advocacy & Media Advocacy*
- *August 29 2020: Summing up & General Advocacy Strategies*
- *August 30 2020: SDG10 Reduced Inequalities, SDG16 Peace and Justice Strong Institutions*

A total of 8 SDGs were discussed followed by 4 skill building workshops. The final session on August 30 2020 was taken by the RfP Philippines Youth Committee.





The RfP India Youth Committee plans to continue working to promote positive peace in India and around the globe with the hope that youth will take action and contribute holistically to creating a more sustainable future.