

UNIVERSAL CODE OF CONDUCT ON HOLY SITES[®]



Model framework for conducting field projects -Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites

What needs to be in place to conduct a field project?

A prerequisite for conducting a field project is a functioning and strong inter-religious council or equivalent body that can endorse project implementation. The council needs to have a secretariat with qualified personnel (or other resource persons), who can be responsible for the implementation of the project. Alternatively, the inter-religious council must partner with a local organization that has strong administrative capabilities and can take on this role.

The roles and responsibilities of the inter-religious council and the local organization need to be clearly delineated when planning the field project. The staff assigned to the project need certain minimum requirements: a good understanding of and sensitivity to religious needs, sufficient freedom from religious bias, and multilingual skills if different religious groups speak different languages.

Prior to implementing activities on the ground, it is essential that a strategic planning takes place in order to align the religious leaders from the different faiths towards a common purpose as this encourages joint ownership of the project.

Possible activities for a field project:

- The development of a database on attacks on holy sites
- Verification of attacks through field visits, responses to attacks (multi-religious condemnations locally where the attack took place), monitoring and documentation of the attacks/incidents
- Education towards the preservation of holy sites and mutual religious respect through conferences, school curricula, materials for site visitors etc.
- Joint multi-religious youth activities for the upkeep of holy sites
- Evaluation of the project implementation undertaken by an independent organization/actor that can analyze the results achieved, the lessons learnt, and produce recommendations for further project implementation
- Additional activities including creating partnerships with relevant local bodies (e.g. legal, political, military, media, municipal) to effect change and to promote sustainability and ultimately institutionalization of the process
- Training of key professionals in local authorities, media, police, judges, prosecutors etc. on the importance of holy sites and the correct prosecution of religious/ethnically-based hate crimes