

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Enabling the Future - Developing the Space Workforce (5)

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SPACE OUTREACH ACTIVITIES IN MIDDLE EAST, ONE STEP FORWARD

Abstract

Middle East is the region of ancient history, the cradle of science, enriched with natural resources, and enforced with youths' potential. Moreover, circumstances have affected it negatively in a way that development pace is not steady among the region. Some countries already have space technology, one has recently established a space agency and some other war-torn countries are without any chance of having space program. Altogether, no force shall stop nations to grow and benefit from advantages of having space technology. One of the main means of advancement is education. This can take form as outreach activities, targeting the general public and by the most reachable tools. Public events like Yuri's night, World Space Week, International Astronomy Day, and so on are examples in larger scale. School talks, cansat/water rocket competitions, educational events in refugee camps, SpaceUp, Space-GenerationX (SGx) and other events are fit for smaller scale with more specific audiences. All space outreach activities can result in sharing knowledge among different ranges of societies.

This paper is the result of a group work as a plan for regional consolidation by regional coordinators (RCs) and National Points of Contact (NPoCs) of Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) of 9 Middle East (ME) countries. Different space outreach activities done so far is presented and ideas for further advancement is investigated.

Similar papers about space outreach in ME have been published in previous IACs (2012, 2013, 2015) using questionnaires or interviews with public and experts. In this paper, we will benefit from the experience of each NPoCs and RCs by collecting reports of conducted projects and events in all ranges. We will investigate challenges, lessons learned, deficiencies, achievements, tools and sharing their knowledge within the region and finally sets of recommendations would be suggested for future plans to increase the efficiency and make it more widespread. Specifically, targeting the war-torn and neglected countries where youths need more courage and motivation to do any space outreach activity is important. Furthermore, we will evaluate one of the most reachable tools-internet- which almost everyone can access. We will briefly discuss the impact of internet on space outreach activities, contribution of virtual forums in events such as Asia-Pacific SGW, IAC virtual Forum and similar events, and investigate how internet can be used as an effective tool in Middle East. The final aim is taking one more step forward for the benefit of all, specifically the next generations.